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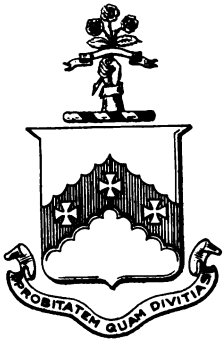

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COUNT HAMILTON'S FAIRY TALE

The Four Facardins

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The Four Facardins

A Fairy Tale

BY

COUNT ANTHONY HAMILTON

WITH A COVER DESIGN AND
FRONTISPIECE BY

HUGH GRAHAM

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PREFATORY NOTE

COUNT HAMILTON'S "Fairy Stories," of which "The Four Facardins" is the longest and best, appear to have been written by him with the intention of turning the "Thousand and One Nights" into ridicule, they having been just published, and in the highest possible favour at the French Court. The extravagant and, as Count Hamilton thought, undeserved praise which was showered upon Galland's version of the "Arabian Nights," as well in the gay as in the literary circles of the Court of Louis Quatorze, caused the author of "The Four Facardins" to level his wit and raillery at the coteries of Versailles and Saint Germain for their enthusiastic admiration of such impossible and ridiculous adventures. His gibes were met, on the part of Galland's admirers, by a challenge to Hamilton to do as well, which he accepted, and produced the tale before us. Those who are familiar with the "Arabian Nights," or any other extravagant fictions of the East, or have read the "Fairy Tales" of the Comtesse d'Aulnois, or have any notion of the ponderous and absurd classical romances of Madame de Scudéry and her school, will be best able to appreciate the sprightly banter and facetious sarcasm of the elegant and accomplished author.

"The Four Facardins" is a very amusing and skilful imitation of an "Arabian Nights' Entertainments" story. It was competently, but somewhat freely, translated by Mat Lewis. The Count evidently never intended to complete the tale, but Lewis, who was quite adequate to such an

effort, and utterly regardless of Shakespeare's assertion that "when two men ride the same horse, one must sit behind," wrote his sequel, which he appended to his translation, and which begins in the present volume at page 113.

A Monsieur de Levis also wrote a sequel (by no means as amusing as that of Lewis) to "Les Quatre Facardins," a translation of which is also inserted in the present volume, beginning on page 225. The original text of Monsieur de Levis is accompanied by a preface, from which are extracted the main portions as follows:—

Preface of Mons. De Levis

"When yielding to the reiterated persuasions of the new editor of Hamilton's works, I resolved on completing the 'Four Facardins,' I had an agreeable but yet confused recollection of the tale, and it was therefore necessary for me, before I undertook this light work, to read again, not only this, but all the author's works, in order that I might seek to imitate his style. This closer study of them has given rise to reflections which I feel it incumbent to publish, because it appears to me that hitherto justice has not been done to him."

(Here follows a long and clever defence of Hamilton's humour, which is omitted, as not relevant to the matter in hand. M. de Levis thus continues:)

"It has been asserted that Hamilton's tales were written with the intention of turning the 'Thousand and One Nights' into ridicule; but this I do not for one moment believe. The 'Arabian Nights' unquestionably gave rise to the 'Four Facardins'; but that its author wished to undervalue a production which had for many ages formed the delight of a nation more witty than civilised, and the

very incorrect version of which holds an honourable place in the libraries of every European nation, is by no means probable.

"Hamilton had too much good taste not to appreciate the merit of a work in which we find all the luxuriance of the Eastern imagination, so much more fervid than our own, with the striking simplicity of the early ages. I know no person who has not read, and read again with pleasure, the 'Wonderful Lamp,' and the 'Three Hunchbacks of Bagdad.'

"This, however, would not prevent Hamilton from ridiculing the infatuation of the ladies of the court, who, with their usual exaggeration, unquestionably preferred the 'Thousand and One Nights' to all books past, present, and to come; but far from vilipending this work, he has sought to imitate it; and the close study of his tales proves that the object of his pleasantry was not the fictions of Asia, but our own western inventions, our monstrous romances of chivalry, and the *great romances* which followed them. I might quote a hundred places where the precise expressions of '*Tiran le Blanc*' and '*Amadis de Gaul*,' are given with a seriousness which makes the irony more piquant. In truth, Hamilton sought to effect amongst us what Cervantes did amongst the Spaniards, with this difference—that in 'Don Quixote,' the shafts of ridicule are principally directed against the chimerical prowess of knights and giants; and our author has rather sought to produce ridicule from the stilted sentiments which our romance writers attributed to their illustrious personages, and the prodigious power they assigned to the charms of their ladies. This design, however, was but a secondary object with him, his real object being to amuse others whilst he amused himself; and I confess, that in finishing his tale, such has been my aim likewise.

"I have not been diverted from this trifling undertaking

by the opinion which historic dictionaries have delivered as to the 'Four Facardins,' although it is too singular not to quote in this place. 'This tale,' say they, 'is an insipid chain of stories crossing each other without any one attaining an end.' How is it possible to reproach Hamilton with not having completed these tales which so cross each other, when he concludes his fragment in these words:—'But I think it best to delay the remainder of the recital which the Prince de Trebizonde delivered, until the second part of these memoirs.'

"As regards the charge of *insipidity*, let it suffice to say, that La Harpe, and all persons of taste, agree in thinking this *badinage* as the most complete they know."

(Here follows an attack on the *Nouveau Dictionnaire*, which we defer,—as Hamilton did the sequel of his Tales,—whilst our readers may believe that our omission will not create "*hiatus valdè deflendus.*" Levis thus concludes:)

"Let us return to the 'Facardins,' which tale is a pleasant riddle in many words; and I have assumed that which first occurred to my mind, without presuming that it was precisely that which Hamilton had in view, and regretting, in common with the vast number of amateurs in this kind of literature, that he did not complete what he commenced in so amusing a style."

. . . . . .

It has been deemed advisable to print this volume privately, restricting its circulation to the members of the Lutetian Society, as, however graceful and witty may be the writings of Count Hamilton, they are all, and more especially his "Fairy Tales," strongly spiced with the leaven of the age.

THE FOUR FACARDINS

AN ARABIAN TALE

PART I

(WRITTEN BY COUNT HAMILTON AND TRANSLATED BY MAT LEWIS)

—"Oh! wonderful, wonderful, and again most wonderful wonderful, and yet again wonderful, and after that out of all whooping."—As You Like It.

AT the court of Schahriar (that monarch, whose method of preserving his honour by cutting his wife's head off, has rendered him so justly celebrated throughout the world) was educated the heir of the small principality of Trebizonde. At an early age he departed in search of adventures; and having consumed two years in this pursuit, he unexpectedly returned to the capital of India. Hearing of his arrival, the sultan was desirous to know the history of his travels. In consequence, one evening the prince was ordered to attend the monarch, whom he found already in his bed-chamber; the fair and wise Scherazade reposed by his side, and her sister Dinarzade occupied as usual a snug little camp-bed in the corner. This latter was not the person least anxious to hear the prince's history; she had perceived that he was young and handsome, and had even been kind enough to let him know that she thought him so. To her great surprise he had taken no notice of her hints, and, anxious to know the reason of his backwardness, she waited for his narrative with

impatience. At the sultan's request he began it in the following words :—

HISTORY OF THE PRINCE OF TREBIZONDE

It is not to the ears of your most august and sublime majesty, that fictitious tales should be related. For my own part, valuing myself upon the most scrupulous veracity, I shall follow your beautiful sultana's example, and inform you of adventures no less true, than they would appear fabulous from any other lips than mine.

I shall only mention my birth so far as relates to my mother's strange superstition, that the happiness or misfortunes of my life would depend upon my name. Accordingly, not finding one to her taste among those adopted by my ancestors, she was on the point of consulting the oracle of Bactria, when her favourite parrot, for whom she had a great regard, took it into his head to repeat "Facardin," several times. This was enough to fix her irresolution, and she determined to honour me with this illustrious appellation. I proceed to that period of my life, which is remarkable for the adventures about to have the happiness of being related to your majesty.

I quitted your court some days before the revolution, which took place on account of your first Sultana. When the news reached me, I had still two days' journey to perform, before I could reach my own dominions; and I must take the liberty to say, that I then disapproved your leaving court no less than I have disapproved your conduct since your return. In my opinion you had better not have married again at all, than have secured your wife's fidelity by not giving her time to be unfaithful; that is to say, by beheading her on the morning after her nuptials.

I stayed at Trebizonde no longer than was necessary to restrain my vassals within the limits of their obedience; for they were on the point of rebelling against your edict, by which it was supposed that all other sovereigns would regulate their conduct. I assured my subjects that I had not the least design to introduce the fashion at Trebizonde. Then having purchased the list of tournaments for the present year, as also a description of the most dangerous adventures to be met with throughout the universe, I set out with the design of rendering my singular name as celebrated as it appears uncommon. Without vanity I may venture to say that I have not quite failed in the attempt.

My preparations were quite different from those made by adventurers in general: instead of a squire to carry my armour and relate my exploits, I took with me a secretary to write them down; and never had poor secretary so much to do!

Fortune favoured me, wherever I went. No beauty could resist the graces of my person, and no hero the valour of my arm. However, I soon grew tired of being always beloved without ever loving; and if luckily I had not found every day some monster to kill or enchantment to destroy, I know not what I must have done for amusement. My secretary, who was naturally a man of sense, and who was much improved by living in my society, endeavoured to comfort me by demonstrating that there were misfortunes in life even greater than those of which I complained.

"Heaven grant," said he, "that the happy Facardin never may know them, and that fortune may guide his steps, far from the fertile plains and dangerous climates of Astracan!"

It was mid-day, and we found ourselves in the midst of a thick and pleasant forest. I was on the point of selecting some shady tree, beneath whose boughs I could seat myself

to hear at my ease my secretary's account of this same Astracan, when we perceived two strangers advancing towards us, mounted on camels. The first attracted my attention, as well by his appearance as by the action which he performed, as soon as he came near us. His figure was the most noble and elegant that I ever had beheld; and his features were so beautiful, that although accustomed to see me every day, my secretary could not forbear expressing his surprise and admiration. We had full time to examine him; for, stopping his camel opposite to us whom he did not observe, he took his helmet from the hands of his attendant; but instead of putting it on, as I expected, he sighed several times, and fixed his eyes tenderly upon a bird sparkling with gold and diamonds, which I took for an eagle, and whose extended wings overshadowed the helmet. After contemplating this image some time, he kissed it respectfully; then returning the casque to his squire, he passed on, still plunged in the same profound reverie, which had prevented his observing us.

It was then that I reflected upon the words of my secretary: I could not but own, that a man really in love must be extremely discomposed at finding in his way such a rival as this stranger. I could not resist my curiosity to know his name; and my secretary having stopped the squire to ask the question, returned in dismay to inform me that he was called Facardin.

"Just heavens!" cried I, in astonishment—"Facardin?"

At this exclamation, the handsome knight thinking that I had called him, turned his camel's head, and inquired my business.

"I would only ask," said I, "whether it is possible that your name should be Facardin?"

"It is but too true," he replied. "Would to heaven that

it were not, since I attribute to a secret fatality attached to this villainous name the greatest part of my misfortunes."

"May I inquire," demanded I, "what those misfortunes are?"

"You shall know," answered he, very politely. "I should be the most constant man upon earth, if I were not as unfortunate in love, as for some time past my heart has been susceptible. Still I cannot complain that my mistresses have deceived me, for none has ever pretended to love me. It is true the most adorable of mortals—the only woman who ever beheld me without aversion—seemed for a moment to return my passion; but, alas! she only proved her regard by putting me to a trial, the remembrance of which makes my blood run cold. But to return to what I was saying, it is impossible that, although I want all other recommendations, my assiduity, attention, and complaisance should be unsuccessful everywhere, if this ridiculous name did not bring me bad luck."

"How," said I, "can a man like you have offered his heart in vain; and can a person of so much sense as you seem to possess, imagine that your name is the cause of your rejection?"

"It is the plain truth," continued he; "to convince you of it I need only relate my adventures; but, doubtless, you must have more weighty employment than listening to the history of my disappointments."

I assured him that just then I had nothing better to do; and to give him some little hope that his fortune would change, I addressed him as follows:—

"Be assured," said I, "noble stranger, that a name is only lucky or unlucky, according to the fortunes of the person who bears it. I know not from what country you come; but to judge by the wonders which you relate of their rigour

and cruelty, the fair ones who inhabit it can be no other than wild cats. I am called Facardin as well as yourself; but to show you how little the name signifies, know, though I have met with a hundred beauties in my travels, some of whom were of the first distinction, none of them ever cost me more than a single sigh. My secretary shall give you the list of them, with their address. Pay them a visit, and when we meet again you will tell a very different story."

"Alas!" replied the unknown, "though you found them lambs, to me they will prove tigresses. In every woman whom I address, never have I failed to excite disgust, the matron of Mount Atlas excepted, who must have excited disgust herself in hearts the least dainty and most susceptible. Listen to me for a few minutes, and you will be convinced of the truth of this assertion."

We now quitted our camels, and while our attendants gathered dates and pomegranates for our refreshment, we chose in the thickest part of the forest a convenient place to repose. The stranger then addressed me as follows:—

THE HISTORY OF FACARDIN OF MOUNT ATLAS

I have vowed never to discover myself, so long as my heart shall remain thus ridiculously susceptible of first impressions, and my person thus universally scorned even by those very damsels who to all others are very far from being cruel. You must excuse, therefore, the concealment of my birth; neither will I mention the kingdom, which I quitted with the design of signalizing myself by some remarkable action. Suffice it to say, that my first object was probably the same, which has brought yourself and so many other adventurers into the field—I mean, the conquest of Moussellina the Serious, heiress of Astracan. But although, as you already

must know either by experience or by report, she is the most perfect of mortals, I undertook this adventure, less from curiosity to behold, or wish to possess her, than from ambition to perform a task so difficult—I may say, indeed, so impossible. Glory was then my heart's only passion. On the subject of love I felt the most absolute indifference.

As yet I have met with no more than two adventures which can merit your attention. The first happened in the Isle of Lions, and gave rise to the second, which took place upon Mount Atlas. The circumstances were as follows:—

At two days' journey from that famous mountain, on whose summit, if poets tell the truth, heaven and the zodiac recline, a vast forest extends itself to the very brink of the sea. This forest is filled with animals of every kind, those of prey alone excepted; and we met them in such multitudes that it was frequently by no means easy to force a passage through them. The inhabitants of a small town, which is situated on its confines, afterwards informed us that all the lions of the surrounding deserts used formerly to quit them for the sake of hunting in this forest, and that having eaten up the stags, goats, and hares, they proceeded to eat up the men, women, and children. In this distress the people had recourse to the enchanter Caramoussal, who resides on the mountain's summit, by whose spells the whole lion nation was banished to a small island, which I easily saw from that part of the shore where the sea bathed the foot of Mount Atlas. Unluckily, in consequence of this emigration, the stags and hares had multiplied so prodigiously, that the distress was nearly as great as during the reign of the lions; the enormous herds, which I had observed in my way through the forest, spreading their ravages to all quarters, and devouring the whole produce of the country. To remedy this complaint, a hunting match was made every year into the neighbouring isle, not with the

intention of disturbing or hurting the lions, but of taking a dozen, and turning them loose in the forest. I was also informed that this hunting match was to take place in two days, and that, if I chose, I might be present at it.

By any other than a knight-errant a lion hunt might not have been thought a party of pleasure, but I accepted the offer with great joy.

The rendezvous of the hunters was on the shore opposite to the Isle of Lions. The isle seemed to be tolerably extensive, of a wild aspect, and much wooded. The preparations for this chase surprised me not a little. I expected to find plenty of huntsmen, armed with darts, arrows, and clubs, besides dogs of all sorts and sizes. Instead of this, I only saw twenty men, accompanied by the same number of girls, young, and by no means ugly. Each girl held a cock upon her wrist, and the boats in which we embarked were well supplied with strong nets. As we approached the isle we could hear roaring and howls so loud and terrible, that my squire, though naturally brave enough, was evidently by no means at his ease; yet not one of our nymphs was in the least disconcerted.

The shore was soon entirely covered by troops of these polite lions, who waited impatiently to receive us. I did not see the possibility of disembarking, in front of an enemy so tremendous: but three of our vessels touching the shore before the rest, three stags were instantly turned out, whom the lions pursuing, the entrance of the isle was left clear for us. As soon as we landed, we advanced into the depth of the forest; and here, while the men spread their nets, the women covered the cocks with small hoods, similar to those which are put on falcons. Scarcely were the nets spread, when the lions returned to us at full speed: there were about two dozen of them, and all, as far as I could judge, were lions with good stomachs. But as we only wanted three or

four at a time, one of the girls unhooded her cock, and pulled him twice or thrice by the tail. The spot in which we stood was so dark that the bird imagined that day was breaking, and began to crow with all his might. The lions at this were so terrified, that they fled from us with all expedition, one excepted, who fell into our toils. He was immediately embarked with one of the huntsmen, and the girl whose cock had just crowed. Though the lion was sufficiently entangled in the net to prevent his doing any harm, it was thought right to put a kid into the same boat, to prevent his thinking the voyage tedious.

This mode of hunting, which appeared to me not more novel than entertaining, lasted till every sportsman had embarked with his lion, his lady, and her bird. I insisted upon being the last, the person who brought up the rear running the greatest risk; and I sent off my squire in the last boat which left the island, the one which had brought me remaining for my own use.

Being a stranger, the girl of the best courage, and the cock with the shrillest voice, were assigned to me for fear of accidents. The damsel began to instruct me respecting the best means of retreating; but enraged to see the cocks carry off all the honour of the expedition, I begged her to keep hers silent, till I had measured my strength against one of the lions, observing, that in case several attacked me at once, she would always have time enough to come to my assistance, and interrupt a combat so unequal. I saw by her looks that she did not above half like the proposal; but at the moment that she prepared to reply, the lions returned to the attack.

Drawing my sword, I advanced to meet them: at their head was the most formidable monster that I ever beheld; his mane bristled, and his eyes glared with rage. By accident, too, this lion was deaf as any post; which I soon discovered, for my

companion (terrified at his enormous size) made her cock crow without a moment's delay, and its cry was so horribly discordant and so shrill, that it went through and through my head completely. All the lions, except that which I have just mentioned, were immediately seized with a sudden panic, and tumbled over each other in their hurry to escape.

The girl and the cock squalled and crowed till they were hoarse, and the noise which they made was even more disagreeable than the company of the lion. Without vanity, the beginning of our engagement well deserved the observation of more calm and illustrious spectators. I soon drew blood from my antagonist in several places: but in return he gave me a scratch, which beginning at the right ear descended like a scarf, to the extremity of my left heel. I had but little skill, neither indeed had my adversary; but then he was furnished with a tail, which annoyed me even more than his claws. As it grew late, I took my sword in both hands, meaning to end the contest at once, before the night arrived: the lion, who, according to all appearance, had the very same intention, rose immediately upon his hind legs, at the same time opening for my accommodation a mouth so enormous as to exceed all measure, all rule, all probability! In her terror at this sight, the girl let the cock slip from her hand; the lion left me to run after the cock, and I left the girl to run after the lion. I soon overtook him, but not time enough to save the unfortunate cock, whom he had already seized, and whom he swallowed before my eyes, as you would do a sugar-plum.

This affront added fresh fuel to my wrath. So much was I transported with rage, that without observing the attitude into which the lion had put himself, I struck off his right paw, with which he endeavoured to make me understand that he was willing to capitulate. The ground was deluged by the blood, which gushed from the wound. I still kept upon my guard,

not doubting that the violence of his attacks would be redoubled by the thirst of vengeance; but vengeance was the last thing in his thoughts: on the contrary, supporting himself against a tree, he cast on me a piteous glance, and sighed—"Ah, Facardin!"—

This appeal affected me, and I was on the point of approaching to assist him, when the cries of my companion summoned me to her succour. She was exerting all her strength to retain the boat, which had broken its cord during the battle; and as she knew this to be our only resource, she made every possible effort to prevent its escaping. Finding, as soon as I joined her, that instead of embarking I prepared to fasten the boat again to the shore, she was ready to go distracted. I told her, that I would sooner die than abandon in such a forlorn situation the unfortunate lion, who had addressed me in a manner so affecting; that I was going in search of him, in order that I might transport him with me to the continent; and that it was my firm resolution to give him all the assistance in my power. She exclaimed vehemently against a proposal, which appeared to her the height of extravagance, and besought me on her knees, not to expose her as well as myself for the sake of an old dead lion to the fury of all the living lions in the islands. She talked in vain: I returned to the place, where I had left him; but it was without success that I sought him both there and in the adjacent parts of the forest.

In consequence I was obliged to regain the boat, heartily ashamed of not bringing back a lion like the other hunters. But my companion's distress is not to be described. She told me, that the loss of her cock had dishonoured her and her whole family for ever, and that she never could survive so signal a disgrace.

I was still endeavouring to alleviate her despair, which I

thought not a little ridiculous, when we reached the foot of Mount Atlas.

It was almost dark. I had lost much blood, and suffered greatly from thirst. Having, in spite of his request to stay, had the attention to send back my squire, I expected that he in return would have the attention to wait for me on the river's bank, or else at the foot of the mountain; but nobody appeared. My companion, growing more desperate with every moment, resolved to attempt gaining the summit of Mount Atlas, and implore Caramoussal's assistance; or in case the magician refused his aid, to precipitate herself from such place as might seem to her most convenient. To prevent the execution of the latter design, I followed her as long as it was possible; but losing her in the obscurity, which prevented my observing the winding paths through which she passed, after much wandering about the cliffs, I was obliged to seat myself in that part which seemed to me most level, and resolved upon passing the night in that situation. Scarcely had I taken my place, when I heard the distant and agreeable noise of a rivulet, which flowed among these solitary rocks. So tormenting was my thirst, that heedless of fatigue, or the dangerous precipices by which I was surrounded, I bent my steps towards the spot whence the sound proceeded. I was certain that I approached it; still I should have found it difficult to reach, if, by dint of examining, I had not discovered just above me a faint ray of light. I took this for my guide. As I approached, by degrees the light grew stronger, and I fancied that I could distinguish the noise of spinning-wheels. I was not mistaken. By the blaze of two large torches, placed on each side of the door of a wretched hut, I perceived two lean and withered arms, with hands suitable, which, passing through two holes in the door, managed a wheel, and spun with more grace than their appearance promised. Having

admired for some moments this discreet and mysterious mode of working, I pushed against the door without knocking. It opened without difficulty, and I beheld the spinner, the rest of whose person was certainly worthy of the specimen which I had already seen. Her face was like an old parchment pasted upon a death's head; she was naked to the waist, and never was corpse more dry or wasted than her miserable body. I turned away my eyes, and demanded something to quench my thirst.

"In this abode," she replied, "you shall want nothing, if you will but have patience, and can resist your inclinations, and conquer your dislikes."—

Thus saying, she embraced me, before I was aware of her intention. Then placing me by her, she perceived that my clothes were bloody. She shuddered, alarmed at my situation, of the danger of which I was myself ignorant.

"Your death would have been inevitable," said she, "had the succour, which I am going to give you, been delayed another hour."

Thus saying, she began to undress me, and examining my wound from top to bottom, she pressed me in her odious arms most affectionately, every now and then kissing the place from whence she wiped the blood. The intolerable disgust, with which her endearments inspired me, did not escape her; but in spite of these marks of aversion, she continued to anoint my wound with an essence, whose odour perfumed the whole hovel.

"Senseless youth!" said she; "knew you the treasure which you reject, and which, I see, you will lose, how fervent would be your gratitude, how different your emotions!"

I was so much recovered and refreshed by this first dressing, that I needed not a second to be in perfect health. I now only wished to quench my thirst, and free myself from my

disagreeable hostess. I therefore requested her to satisfy the first and most urgent of my necessities, since the succour, which she had just given me, would be unavailing, if she suffered me to die of drought.

"I must put you then to that trial," said she, "which I foresee, you will be unable to sustain. Follow me."

So decrepit was she, that she raised herself with the utmost difficulty; and her person gave me so much disgust, that I could not bring myself to afford her any support. She was quite bent double, and in spite of the crutch on which she leaned, I thought she never could drag herself out of the first apartment, the most dirty and miserable one that I ever beheld. The next was rather better, and the third much larger, and tolerably furnished; but the last was the most magnificent room perhaps in the universe. It appeared to be rather the fabled habitation of some fairy, than the apartment of a mortal. Nothing was to be seen but glasses, admirable pictures, and furniture the most costly. On one side stood an elegant toilette, displaying a variety of jewels; on the other, a bed, covered with Chinese gold and oriental pearls in embroidery, seemed only to wait the Divinity's arrival, for whose use they were prepared: not far from the toilette, I perceived an undress, fit for the wearing of an Empress of eighteen.

It took us a considerable time to reach this chamber; for besides that the old lady moved very deliberately, she never suffered me to enter any apartment, before she had passed her hands through two holes in the door, and spun for a few moments, as I found her doing on my arrival. My thirst was much irritated by this delay; still its violence was suspended for some instants, while I gazed on the objects contained in the latter chamber. But my companion soon interrupted this examination.

"Come!" said she, taking my hand; "let us to the fountain. What you behold here can only serve to excite flames in your bosom, and what you want is water to cool those which burn there already. Follow me, and you shall be satisfied."

It was unnecessary for her to say this twice; I followed her eagerly. The fountain was within a few yards of the magnificent chamber, and from thence had the sound proceeded which first induced me to search for water. As soon as I beheld it, I rushed open-mouthed towards the largest sheet, which fell from the rock above; but the provoking old woman detained me by the arm.

"Hear me for the last time!" she cried; "if resisting your inclination to quench your thirst, you can resolve to pass a whole hour in my arms without tasting this water, I will reconduct you to the chamber through which I led you, and you shall be at liberty to pass the remainder of the night with me on that superb couch, which you have just beheld."

Wishing to accompany this proposal with a tender glance, she turned upon me two little pig's eyes, which rather resembled a dog's just dead of the mange, than a human creature's! As for me, in the perfect indifference to beauty which I then felt, and in the violence of thirst so immoderate, I should have preferred three glasses of cold water to the three graces. I therefore shook off her hold rather rudely, ran to the fountain, and began to drink as eagerly as if I feared seeing the stream fail, before my thirst was satisfied.

The lady, to whom I had not thought proper to sacrifice this pleasure, retired while I was drinking, and probably not in the best humour. That, however, was to me a matter of absolute indifference. I now found myself perfectly easy and contented; sleep came upon me, and I accepted its advances without hesitation.

It was broad day, when I awoke, and much was I surprised to find myself in a spot, the most horrible that I had ever seen! I gazed around me, striving in vain to comprehend how I had got into such a desert, or how I should get out of it. The stream, of which I had drunk the night before, gushed from the summit of a rock seemingly detached from the rest of the mountain, and I found myself stationed upon this summit. I could perceive the roofs of the hut and of the enchanted palace, which had excited in me such admiration: but I was separated from them by a precipice so tremendous, that I shuddered, whenever my eye dared to measure its depth; and on every side I was surrounded by beetling rocks, which, instead of offering me a passage, seemed leaning forward for the express purpose of tumbling themselves upon me. Fully persuaded that I had not been transported to this place through the air, I persisted in my perilous search after some outlet, and at length I succeeded in my inquiry. It was the entrance of a cavern, equally obscure and deep, which seemed rather the retreat of some wild beast, than a passage to scenes less tremendous. However, I resolved to examine it, and drawing my sword, I descended into this gloomy cave; hopeless of finding any other issue, than that by which I had entered. But after many difficulties, I felt that the ground rose, and perceived a feeble glimmering of light which guided me to the spot where day penetrated into this subterraneous abyss. This second outlet was totally different from the first: it was a spacious grotto, ornamented with shells and marble statues: a bow of polished steel hung on one side; on the other was a quiver, ornamented with gold and jewels, and filled with arrows; and in the middle of the grotto a large cage of jet inlaid with ivory was suspended from the roof. I was so eager to get out of

the scrape in which I found myself, that without staying to reflect on what I saw, I hastened out of the cave, and was near treading upon something sparkling which lay a few paces from the door. It was a shoe, whose buckle was formed of four diamonds, the most perfect and brilliant that I ever beheld: but the shoe itself was so small, and so exquisitely shaped, that I bestowed no thought upon the immense worth of the buckle. Having read that Pallas, when she walks, makes the earth tremble and the forests shake, and that the immortal Juno takes but one stride from Mount Ida to the Isle of Samos, I was tolerably certain, that I had not found the shoe of a goddess; but I determined to discover the mortal, if it were possible, whose foot could be worthy to wear so delicately formed a slipper.

I brought it away with me, though I did not expect to retain its possession long; for I guessed it to be the lady's property, whose hunting accoutrements I had seen in the grotto, or else that it belonged to the other invisible nymph, for whom the toilette was prepared in the old woman's hovel. I was still hesitating whether I should return there to seek her, or had better wait in the grotto till some one should come thither to look for the shoe, when I was induced to abandon both designs by hearing cries and lamentations proceed from the rock above. I ascended it in haste; for the voice seemed to be a female's, and since my finding this slipper, my heart was wonderfully softened in favour of a sex, for which till then I had felt the most perfect indifference. I soon discovered that the mourner was no other than my nymph of the cock! As soon as she saw me she fell at my feet, entreating me to plunge my sword in her bosom. I was by no means disposed to grant her this favour, for she had already inspired me with a tender inclination. I raised her respectfully, and having assured her

that I would hazard my life in the attempt to extricate her from her difficulties, I was on the point of seating myself by her, in order to hear at my ease the cause of her affliction; when she gave me a look of surprise, eyed me from head to foot, as if she had never seen me before, and removed immediately to some distance.

"Be good enough," said she, "to sit a little farther off, for you seem to me so disagreeable, that I cannot suffer you to come so near me."

I obeyed with all humility, and the impertinent creature, turning away her head, that she might not see me while she spoke, addressed me as follows:—

"Before I disclose the cause of my despair, which perhaps appears to you ridiculous, you must know, that the cocks, which you have seen, are only entrusted to those damsels who like myself are distinguished either for rank or merit. Three grand hunting-matches are held every year, similar to that unlucky one at which you were present yesterday, and those young women, who in four years bring home twelve lions, are united to the lovers, who attend on them during those four years. In the meantime they see their admirers at all hours; but 'tis as much as their lives are worth to grant the least favour, till the twelve lions are taken. Should a cock make his escape, 'tis a sign that there has been some little impropriety in the conduct of his mistress; however, if the bird is found again, the crime is not capital; but at the end of three days, if he is still absent, it is a convincing proof of a criminal intercourse, and the seceder from virtue is immediately buried alive. It is this, which causes my despair: my cock never can be found again, since I saw it with my own eyes devoured by that brute of a lion. Wretch that I am! Why did he not devour me at the same time! Why did I not perish

without knowing the most amiable of mankind; or why did not all the men whom I have ever known appear to me as ugly and disagreeable as you do?"

Insults so broad would have offended most people; but the worse that she treated me, the more did I admire her, and I was still endeavouring to express my growing passion, when her lover made his appearance. I immediately recognised him for one of our hunters, nor was my companion slow in showing her recollection of him. She instantly flew towards him with open arms, and professed herself happy, before she was deprived for ever of the light of day, once more to behold the beams of his bright eyes. Now this lover of hers was bandy-legged, pug-nosed, and copper-coloured; and the bright eyes, which she raved about (like a Chinese pig's), never had known what it was to be quite open. Having embraced her tenderly, he told her, that guessing her distress, he had provided a boat, which then waited at the foot of the mountain, and that he could easily carry her off, if I, who had reduced her to this extremity would for one hour protect them from the matron's monster.

"And who is the matron's monster?" said I.

"You will know but too soon," he answered, "for he is looking for his lady's slipper, which I see in your hand."

This said, he clasped his mistress in his arms, and hastened with her towards the sea with all expedition. At first I felt a little jealous, but no sooner were they out of sight, than I thought no more of them. Adventures had succeeded each other so rapidly on this mountain, that scarcely could I persuade myself that I was not in a dream; but more were yet behind, for it now happened——

. . . . . .

"'Tis you, who dream," interrupted Dinarzade impatiently; "you are desired to relate your own adventures, which in

the present posture of affairs you should have told as concisely as possible; and instead of this you weary us with another person's, accompanied with details so uninteresting, that it is a doubt whether they are more tedious or trifling."

"And what does it signify," cried the Sultan, "whose adventures he relates, so that they amuse me, and last out the night? What have I better to do, than to hear them? Go on, Facardin," he added, "and heed not the remarks of these chatterboxes, who never are satisfied, but when they are talking themselves."

Dinarzade bit her lips with impatience. The fair Sultana, who had now passed a thousand nights in bed, with nothing better to amuse her than tales only fit to set one asleep, raised her eyes devoutly to heaven, and Facardin of Trebizonde proceeded thus:

. . . . . .

If I remember right, I was interrupted in that part of the stranger's history, where he informed me that he fancied himself to have been dreaming, while revolving the variety of events to which so short a space of time had given rise. I now endeavoured, he continued, to regain the grotto; but instead of taking the path by which I had ascended the rock, I followed one, which, after a tedious journey, conducted me to the matron's abode. The door was open; the spinning-wheel was still there, but no hands were employed in turning it. Finding no longer so insuperable an aversion for a female whose first appearance had so much disgusted me, I resolved to enter, and review the wonders of the beautiful apartment. I held the slipper in my hand; I ceased not for a moment to admire it, and I frequently pressed it to my lips as fondly as if it had been the portrait of a mistress most passionately beloved.

Just as I prepared to enter the hut, I was stopped by

an enormous giant, armed with a huge club, and covered with rough hair from head to foot. His manner of accosting me surprised me considerably, for his gestures were much less gentle, and his looks much more savage than the lion's, whom I had the honour of killing the day before. The first thing which he did on seeing me, was to take his club in both hands, and gnash his teeth like a wild boar: the second was to thank Heaven for throwing the thief in his way, who had stolen his lady's slipper; and he then proceeded to assure me that he should already have dashed out the few brains which the gods had given me, if the matron his mistress had not commanded him to reserve me for torments the most excruciating. From the sound of the voice which uttered it, I fancied that some bull was pleased to make me this civil speech; after which the giant continuing his discourse, ordered me to surrender the slipper, and follow him without delay.

"I should find it less trouble," said he, "to take it from you by force, than to ask you for it; but my mistress has commanded me to make you restore it through fear of my prowess, and therefore down upon your knees this moment."

"Are those your mistress's commands?" said I; "then pray, present my best respects to her, and tell her from me, that neither you nor all your fellow-monsters put together shall make me surrender a shoe, whose beauty has charmed me, and which I did not obtain by dishonourable means."

As I said this, I saw that the wild dromedary had already raised his club to crush me, and I instantly drew my sword. His strength was prodigious; but as he was not very expert, I easily avoided his blows, the gentlest of which was sufficient to shiver the rocks in pieces, and overturn the surrounding trees. However, as I contrived to draw blood

from him every time that he missed me, I should probably have finished the combat unhurt, had it not been my fate to get scratched in this land of wonders. It seems that the giant had a nail on the great toe of his right foot, which the Erymanthian boar might have been proud of. This I did not discover for some time, but at length I had good reason to perceive it; for as I stooped to escape a blow from his club, which he pretended to aim at me, he found an opportunity of giving me a slash by no means inferior to that which I had received from the lion the day before. This incensed me so highly, that with a furious blow I lopped off the leg, to whose foot was attached the weapon which had favoured me with so respectable a wound. His fall was like that of a tower's, and the earth trembled as he touched it. I threw myself upon him intending to strike his ugly head from his shoulders; but a voice, which proceeded from the hut, made me hold my hand.

"Valiant knight," cried the voice, "kill not my monster."

I obeyed, and quitting him, entered the hovel, intending to present the matron with the slipper which force could not oblige me to surrender, and to explain that I had not obtained it by discreditable means. I now supposed that it must belong to some daughter or niece of hers, for whom in all probability the chamber and clothes were prepared, which I had seen the night before.

But in vain did I traverse the various apartments; no one appeared; and part of the garments, which I had seen near the toilette, had been taken away. Hoping to obtain from him some intelligence of his mistress, I returned to the place where I had left the giant; but he also was gone, and had carried away his leg with him. Though I had lost a considerable quantity of blood, I did not find myself much weakened, and was only sensible of hunger to a degree not

less violent than had been the thirst, which tormented me the night before. I resolved to look for something to appease the first, where I had so lately succeeded in appeasing the second; but the hovel door closed at my approach, nor could all my efforts suffice to open it. The grotto was now my only resource—I sought it for some time without success, nor perhaps should I ever have found it, had I not been conducted thither by the agreeable smell of roast meat. With an appetite like mine I could not have met with a guide more acceptable: I followed it with joy; and no sooner did I reach the grotto, than I was more than ever convinced that I must certainly be dreaming.

How beautiful was the form which on my entrance presented itself to my admiration! A nymph in a hunting-dress was reclining on a magnificent sofa, and looked in that attitude, as if the queen of love had borrowed Diana's garments to follow to the chase some new Adonis. Part of her bosom was uncovered; and that part was, in my opinion, worth all the treasures which the caverns of the earth, the billows of the sea, or the women in the universe, can possibly manage to conceal. Her petticoat was tucked up on one side, and fastened above her knee by a diamond buckle, similar to that which ornamented the beautiful slipper; and the leg, which by this means was displayed, was so exquisitely turned, as to make me certain that it could not possibly be the property of a mortal. As soon as she saw me, she gazed on me for a few moments with attention.

"Though the aversion with which your ridiculous deformity inspires me," said she, "and the esteem which I cannot deny to your valour, are now combating within my bosom, I am still willing to offer you the means of securing your own happiness, and at the same time of contributing to mine. You have found my slipper," she continued, "and

your presumption in touching it is expiated in some degree by the intrepidity with which you asserted your claim to it. Had you surrendered it to the giant, there would have been an end for ever of your hopes and mine, for in the man who would possess me, courage is an indispensable qualification. But before I proceed, let me prove to you that this shoe is really mine; here is my foot; approach, and put it on."

I obeyed with mingled tenderness and respect, and while kneeling before her, my transports were so violent that I scarcely knew what I was about. The shoe was put on with all imaginable ease; after which she bade me take it off again, and then inquired what had conducted me to the grotto. I now for the first time recollected my necessities, and I told her that I was dying of hunger, with a look as fond and languishing as if I had told her that I was dying of love.

"What!" she exclaimed; "ever these gross and sensual desires? Last night you visited the matron because you were thirsty, and this morning your only reason for visiting me is because you are hungry! But no matter; I shall soon discover whether you deserve the misfortune which you have drawn upon yourself by drinking, and whether you will make yourself worthy of that glorious fate which will be yours as soon as you shall have eaten sufficiently. As I am impatient to know whether you really merit the advantages which the stars appear to promise you, take this bow without delay, and let me see whether you can bend it."

I obeyed, persuaded that I should find this task as easy as the putting on her slipper; but it was not without considerable efforts that I at length succeeded. No sooner was the deed performed, than the string of the bow produced

a sound so melodious, that it could only be equalled by that which proceeded from the cage of Jet; whose door opening at that moment, a large bird flew out with such swiftness, as to prevent my distinguishing its species. Surprised at the adventure which I had just accomplished, the nymph surveyed me with attention, but almost instantaneously turned away her head again, as if her eyes had been shocked by some disgusting object.

"Take an arrow from yonder quiver," said she; "look upwards, and aim at whatever you see in the air."

I left the grotto, and thought I could distinguish a fly far above me. As nothing else was to be seen, I discharged my arrow at it, which was soon out of sight; but just when I supposed it to be in the middle region of the air (so long was it ere it descended), I saw it fall at my feet, loaded with the largest cock that I ever beheld.

The nymph ran towards the bird, kissed it thrice affectionately, and drew out the arrow; on which the cock sprang into the air as if nothing had happened, and disappeared in a few moments. This exploit seemed to inspire the fair huntress with more respect for me, though not enough to abate her aversion.

"Yes," said she; "you must certainly be the person destined to release me; yet if I owe my deliverance to you, how can I endure to pass my life with a man whose appearance is no less disgusting and ridiculous than his actions are glorious and sublime? Prince, be careful of my slipper; seek through every region of the earth, nor present yourself again before me, till you have found a foot that can fit my shoe, a woman that can love you, or a cock that can fly as high as that which you have just seen. Having presented me with one of these three wonders, you will only need to obtain the matron's favours to entitle you

to mine; but without this last condition, and one or other of the first three, I shall always be unfortunate, and you never will be happy. However, before you set out in search of these adventures, I must put you to a preliminary trial. You remember, I suppose, that in spite of all entreaties to the contrary, you insisted last night upon drinking: to punish you for this obstinacy, I now inform you that however great may be your disgust, you are expected to eat whatever may be set before you, without being desired at all."

I asked no better: I thought that nothing could be served up at the table of a person so elegant, that could possibly baulk an appetite so voracious as mine; but when I examined what was placed before me, it was a wonder that I kept from fainting. You never could guess, valiant knight, what composed this diabolical ragout; I am therefore obliged to explain, that the dish contained the giant's leg, not forgetting the foot, and the large nail that adorned it!

The sight made my hair bristle with horror; I turned sick, and was leaving the grotto, anxious to escape from so disgusting an object, when, without speaking, the nymph heaved a deep sigh, and gave me a look no less expressing pity than resentment. That look was sufficient to determine my conduct: I closed my eyes, tore off a morsel from the leg, and swallowed it. Having obeyed thus far, I again prepared to retire, assuring my hostess that I should feel no desire to eat for at least the next four days. She seemed much softened by my compliance, fixed her eyes upon me more steadily than before, and so much delighted me by the change which I perceived in their expression, that I got down a little bit more. On this she drew nearer, placed her hand familiarly upon my shoulder, and

told me that although she would not ask it of me, it was necessary for me to pick the whole leg to the bones.

"I feel the charm's effect," said she; "my heart tells me that the first spell is on the point of being dissolved. Persevere, and you need not go far to find a woman who loves you; but if you leave this place, or if your meal is interrupted, before you can empty the dish, you will become, if possible, more disagreeable to me than you are at present."

These words touched my heart, and produced no slight effect upon my head; they animated my courage, but alas! they did not augment my appetite. However, though the leg was sufficient to feed ten famished persons, since such was the condition of my trial, I resolved to use every effort to fulfil it; and I determined either to swallow the whole, or to burst bravely before the eyes of my Divinity! It was in the very midst of this magnanimous attempt that my confounded squire, who probably had been seeking me for some time, made the rocks re-echo with the name of Facardin. Suddenly the nymph changed colour; she seemed irresolute for a few moments, and then finding that I was the object of pursuit, she hastened into the subterraneous passage, leaving me more confounded, more surprised and more afflicted, than I have power to express. I had perceived that her glances grew milder; the wound given me by the giant closed while I was employed in eating his leg; and the presence of the most lovely creature in the universe, who reclined affectionately upon my shoulder, had enabled me to support the horror of my trial. But no sooner did she leave me, than forgetting her injunctions I forsook my horrible repast, and flew towards the passage by which she had departed: the moment that I approached it, a strong and rushing wind not only opposed my entrance,

but raised me with violence from the ground, and blew me out of the grotto. As soon as I was on the outside, the door (which had two holes in it similar to those in the door which protected the matron's cottage) closed of its own accord; through these holes two arms, whiter than snow, and more beautiful than Cytherea's, immediately passed themselves; an ebony spinning-wheel inlaid with gold placed itself spontaneously before them, and the spinning recommenced with more diligence than ever. I was now convinced that the Divinity whom I had just seen was the matron's daughter, and that spinning was a favourite occupation in this enchanted family. I drew nearer, with the intention of throwing myself on my knees before the nymph, of whom I saw nothing but the arms, and of conjuring her in pity to open the door; when my squire, having at length discovered me, began to bawl out my name louder than ever. Immediately the beautiful hands disappeared; the grotto door opened with violence; and the giant, putting out his head, blew in my face with such force, that he rolled both my squire and myself down to the place where I had first distinguished the ray of light which had guided me to the matron's cottage. When I recovered from my fall, my squire informed me that it was high time to be gone, and he conjured me to descend with all expedition, while it was still in my power to escape.

"What could put it in your head," said he, "to climb this confounded mountain, which is crammed full of sorcerers and enchantments, while all the inhabitants of the neighbouring villages were in search of you? I waited till midnight by the river side; and then, supposing that while I was looking for you there, you must have landed somewhere else, in hopes of finding you I hastened to the next village; but here I was told rare news of you: it was reported that you had either

seduced or ravished the girl who was left with you on the island; that her cock was lost; that you had disembarked with her, and that both had concealed yourselves in the cavities of the mountain, to avoid the punishment of your offence. In consequence all the inhabitants assembled this morning at daybreak; a council was held; the troops were ordered to march; and one part of them undertaking to surround the mountain, and bar every avenue, the other ascended it, and dispersed themselves through all the various paths by which it was possible for you to have passed. Now then, my dear master, I gave you up for lost. They had secured me, fearful lest I should apprise you of their designs; and they assured me very seriously, that I should have the honour to share your punishment. I was almost distracted to think that a man who had always been so prudent and so indifferent respecting this sort of frailty, as you have been, should at length throw away his life thus foolishly for the sake of a vulgar hussy and her dunghill cock. In the midst of these melancholy reflections, a loud shout, proceeding from that side of the mountain which was nearest the sea, augmented my distress; for it was immediately reported that you had been seized in the very act of eloping with your new mistress. How great was my joy when I beheld the captives. The companion of this unlucky girl was one of the hunters, who it seems had been long attached to her. Their doom was pronounced without delay; and though they continued to assert their innocence, the lover was compelled to dig a pit, into which he put his mistress up to the neck, after tenderly embracing her, and taking a most affectionate farewell. The pit was then filled up again; but at the very moment that nothing of the damsel was visible except her head, and which was also on the point of disappearing, a cock was heard to crow in the air above her.

"All raised their eyes; the noise was heard again, but still nothing could be distinguished. At length one of the principal persons drew a telescope from his pocket, and declared that it was a gnat mimicking the crowing of a cock: on the other hand, the lover asserted that it was the identical cock which his mistress had lost, and swore by the great Caramoussal that he recognised him by his manner of crowing. While they were still debating this question, a real live cock, which had raised itself higher than ever cock had done before, descended and perched upon the damsel's head. The universal acclamations gave him not the least alarm; he kept his place with great intrepidity, while the whole company agreed in thinking that this prodigy was effected by the great Caramoussal, and was a convincing proof of the girl's innocence; but no sooner did they approach in order to restore her to liberty, than the cock stretched out his neck, clapped his wings, crowed thrice, and then darting into the air with the swiftness of a falcon, in a moment was out of sight. This persuaded the spectators that her conduct with her lover had not been perfectly correct; but as the cock in clapping his wings, had put out her left eye, he was supposed to have meant this as a punishment for granting trifling favours, and she was declared fully justified of any capital offence. In consequence, she was immediately released both from the pit and her apprehensions; she was conducted home to her parents in triumph; and while they were busied in dressing her eye, I hastened hither to conjure you to leave a country where the mountains are full of sorcerers, the islands of lions, and the villages of men, women, and cocks, who, for anything that I can see, are not a jot better than the sorcerers or the lions."

The truth of this account was confirmed by my adventures on the mountain. I resolved therefore to follow my squire's

advice, and we left this repository of prodigies and incomprehensible events without meeting any further impediment. The more that I revolved upon what had passed, the less was I persuaded that it had really happened. The lion, who had called me by my name; the old woman, who loved me so tenderly; the young one, who hated me so inveterately; the nymph of the grotto, who enjoined me to do what could not be done; the water, which I drank with such eagerness, and the meat, which I ate with such disgust; all appeared to have been equally delusions: but the precious slipper was still in my possession, and that was sufficient to establish the reality of all the rest. I caused this helmet to be made at the nearest city; and this cock enriched with diamonds, clapping his wings, and in the act of crowing, conceals the wonderful shoe, which I shall now offer to your admiration.

Here, opening the crest of his helmet, the courteous stranger drew forth the shoe, which he had praised so highly; it was concealed within the golden cock, which I had at first mistaken for an eagle. I confess, most illustrious Sultan, the sight of it filled me with surprise. This slipper was in truth a masterpiece, no less in respect to shape than size and elegance. I could not look at it without emotion, though I was convinced that it was made solely to display the artist's workmanship, and could not have been designed for the use of any human being. In vain did the stranger protest that his own hands had placed it on the foot of the fair huntress: I persisted in my incredulity. Having examined it for some time, and with the owner's permission pressed it respectfully to my lips, I at length restored it to its former concealment: after which Facardin of Mount Atlas resumed his narration.

The insignificant adventures said he, which I met with after this, are unworthy your attention; nor will I trouble you with the tedious list of refusals, insults, and disdain which

fell to my lot, wherever my vows were offered. I thought every woman deserving my affection, and every woman thought my affection undeserving her acceptance. They who were no longer in the bloom of life, preferred their servants, and they who were, preferred mine. However, if all refused me their favours, none refused to try on the shoe; but here, alas! I was no less unsuccessful: not one could get in a single toe. No hope now remained for me but to find a cock which could raise itself as high as that of the fair huntress; that is to say, a cock that could fly like an eagle. To my sorrow, I find, that this is no less a rarity than a woman who can love me, or a foot that can fit the beautiful slipper.

I had already traversed Asia and Africa, and was on the point of embarking for Europe, when the ambassadors of Fortimbrass with the great mouth, king of Denmark, arrived at the port of Sidon. They told us that they were in pursuit of a mouth proportioned like their master's, and expressed their fears that their search would be unsuccessful. To justify these apprehensions, they drew from a golden casket the exact measure of the royal mouth, and a most enormous one it was in truth! I owned that though I had travelled far and wide, I never had met with a mouth at all to be compared to it; and I begged to be informed, when he had found it, what in the world their master meant to do with a mouth so monstrous. I was answered, that this desire was excited by a most strange and unfortunate adventure, which they had not then time to explain; on this the chief ambassador, who seemed a person of no small consequence, sighed several times, and at length burst into tears. The eyes of his companions immediately overflowed; and both my squire and myself were too well bred not to follow their example, though what these venerable persons were crying about, we could not conceive.

"Adieu, my beloved country!" exclaimed at length the chief ambassador; "we bid you an eternal adieu, forbidden to revisit your happy climates till two things are found, neither of which the earth can furnish."

Guessing that the large mouth must be one of those things, I begged him to inform me what was the other. He replied that his master had a daughter, on whom he doated. She was extremely beautiful, and called Sapinella of Jutland. This damsel not being able to get slippers to fit her, had gone mad in consequence, and persuaded her father to hang up all the cobblers in the kingdom. Informed of the difficulty to please her, and dreading the fate of their comrades, the foreign shoemakers had refused to work for her; and at length things were brought to such a pass, that, yielding to his affection for her, the king had published throughout his dominions, that whoever could shoe the beautiful Sapinella should marry her for his trouble. It was, however, specified in the bargain, that such as failed in the attempt should be hung with as little ceremony as had been shown to their predecessors.

"And thus," continued the ambassador—"thus are we, wretched slaves of a despotic master and a capricious mistress, condemned either to find the little slipper and the large mouth, or never to revisit the fertile plains of Denmark—Denmark, that beloved country which gave us birth. Such are the curious commissions which we are enjoined to execute; and you can easily conceive that we have but too much reason in thinking that we have bidden adieu for ever to our native land!"

While making these reflections the tender-hearted ambassador cried like an infant. Those which his narrative had suggested to me were of a very different nature; and after meditating for some time upon the conditions stipulated

in the King of Denmark's edict, I asked what would be the consequence of presenting Sapinella with a shoe too small.

"For," said I, "though I suppose her in size to be no bigger than a doll, yet a slipper may be made so small that even a doll cannot get her foot into it."

Highly offended by this observation, the chief ambassador bestowed on me a look of most profound contempt.

"Young man," said he, "when you have seen a little more of the world, you will learn to treat a fair one with greater respect, whose fame can only be unknown to yourself, and such as resemble you. Should chance ever lead you to the feet of our princess, you will see what sort of feet they are, and be obliged to confess that, Moussellina the Serious excepted, she need yield to no one in point of figure. 'Tis not, therefore, so much the smallness of her foot—that being perfectly proportioned to her commanding height—which makes the fitting her with shoes a matter of difficulty, as its shape, elegance, and form, no less singular than beautiful."

"But, my good lord ambassador," said I, "suppose the person who produces a slipper perfectly adapted to the shape, elegance, and singular form of this beautiful foot should by no means be inclined to marry your infanta, what what would be the consequence of his refusal?"

"Should any one be found," answered the Dane—"but it appears to me impossible that there should—so cold, so stupid, so weak in judgment, and so deficient in taste as to renounce Sapinella of Jutland's lawful possession, she is then obliged by oath (her honour and all belonging to it being out of the question) to grant him whatever favour he may think proper to demand."

My reasons for asking this question, I doubt not, valiant stranger, are already known to you. This answer determined

my conduct, for till then my scruples had kept me in suspense. Though the charming huntress still reigned in my bosom, not to fall in love with every woman who came in my way was to me utterly impossible. However, the moment they were out of sight I forgot all others, and only remembered the beautiful unknown. The princess offered her hand to him who could accomplish a task which she despaired of ever seeing performed; on the other hand, certain death was his punishment who failed in the attempt. I had long sought a foot worthy the most beautiful shoe in the world; Sapinella had long sought a shoe worthy the most beautiful foot in the universe, which, as she thought, belonged to her own person. If, on the one hand, I feared, lest the sensibility of my heart should make me forget everything but her beauty, while I gazed on a princess, who had been painted to me in colours so fascinating; on the other, the aversion with which I had always inspired the whole sex seemed to promise me a safeguard against my own weakness. I had traversed two quarters of the world without finding a female who would accept my heart; nor had I found any cocks except dunghill ones, who knew no more how to fly than I did myself. I determined therefore to embark on board one of the ambassador's vessels to try my slipper on the foot of the Danish princess; and should I succeed in my attempt, then to lead her to the grotto in triumph, where dwelt the nymph with the steel-bow. The ambassadors, who really were mighty good sort of people, opposed this design with much earnestness. They represented to me all the difficulties of such an enterprise; and they assured me, that I should find it very inconvenient to be hung in the flower of my age, a fate which I could not escape should I handle Sapinella's foot without success. I was obstinate; and as I had not divulged to him the mystery of the

beautiful slipper, the chief ambassador, who was much addicted to blubbering, actually burst into tears on seeing me ascend the vessel.

The wind was so favourable, that seven months after my embarkation I reached the Scandinavian coast so favoured by nature. Having traversed those immense provinces, I at length arrived at the court of Fortimbrass with the wide mouth. Here it was that I expected to meet with adventures much more worthy your attention than those which you have just heard. Judge, then, how great was my disappointment when, upon inquiring for the princess, I was informed——

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In this part of his history the handsome stranger was interrupted by an unexpected flourish of cymbals, tymbals, fifes, trumpets, flageolets, bagpipes, cowhorns, and drums, which suddenly resounded through the forest. We looked eagerly round us, and our eyes for some time rested in vain on the spot whence the noise proceeded. The nearer that this singular concert approached, the more was our surprise augmented, as we still were unable to discover the cause. Suddenly my secretary and the stranger's squire, who had climbed two lofty trees, and who by this means enjoyed a more extensive look out, rejoined us in terror, and announced that a troop of Arabs, whom the hills had till then prevented us from descrying, was seen hastening towards us, no doubt intending to surround our little party. On receiving this intelligence we took our camels from our attendants, and having mounted them, advanced boldly towards the robbers, whom we could now perceive; but we soon discovered that the new-comers were neither robbers nor Arabs; and that, as to surrounding us, nothing could be farther from their inclination. Still their appearance surprised us not a little. As far as our eyes could reach

we discovered an ever-lengthening chain of camels, horses, mules, and elephants, heavily laden with litters, palanquins, and baggage of every description. They were escorted by a numerous body of soldiers and slaves, all habited in chintz, the colours of which were so lively and brilliant, that the whole appeared to us a moving parterre, enamelled with the choicest flowers of spring and summer. We stopped to observe the progress of this singular convoy, in whose middle a palanquin, sparkling with gold, and adorned with designs of the most exquisite finish, failed not to attract the chief part of our observation.

This palanquin was shut up on all sides. Four slaves of gigantic stature bore it on their shoulders, while of four satraps on horseback each supported an umbrella over it, to protect it from the heat of the sun. The satraps, the slaves, and the palanquin, were all covered with chintz; but that chintz was of so fine a texture, so admirably painted, and magnificently embroidered, that my secretary (than whom nobody understands these matters better) has frequently assured me since, that it could not be worth less than two talents an ell. Round the palanquin the musicians were stationed, whose concert had been the original means of engaging our attention. Unluckily, as soon as they approached us, the concert began again, and we soon discovered, that in order to remain in its neighbourhood, it was absolutely necessary to be well used to it. This unexpected music made us start one and all; but it appeared so terrible to our camels, that after all the extravagant actions which sudden terror makes those animals perform, they fairly ran away with us. Every effort to hold them back only redoubled their impatience to be gone, and the impetuosity with which they hurried us away. My secretary's beast and my own, who stuck close together,

turning short round as if by agreement, dashed like mad things through the rear, which came loitering after the rest, and trampled upon all, who happened to be in their way. The general confusion which this occasioned, and the cries of such as found themselves attacked in this *impromptu* manner, increased still more the fury of these infernal animals, who slackened not their speed, till they reached the banks of a large river. Here for a moment they stopped to take breath; but the recollection of their fright soon returning, they plunged into the water, without giving us the least hint of their design. All that we could do in this moment of surprise, was to hold fast by the ears, and endeavour to reach the opposite bank of the river, which was both deep and rapid. We were now above fifteen stadii distant from the forest, where we had caused so much confusion. Gladly would I have returned thither, being equally anxious to know what was become of the handsome Facardin, and to hear the conclusion of his adventures. But my secretary representing to me the danger and difficulty of repassing the river, the near approach of night, and the fresh disturbance which our camels would occasion, should the same infernal clatter recommence on our arrival, I gave up the point, and suffered him to conduct me to a cottage, which we descried at some distance. I passed the night in all the agonies of impatience: no sooner did the morning dawn, than I again set forward, anxious to learn what could be meant by this triumphal procession, in which chintz furniture made so conspicuous a figure, and still more desirous of rejoining Facardin and his shoe, from whom I hoped to hear the catastrophe of his adventures. Unluckily a dreadful tempest which had not ceased during the night, swelling the mountain-torrents, had caused such an overflow of the river, that it would have been useless to attempt to

pass it or to wait till the waters should abate. The people with whom I lodged, assured me, that all the plains on that side would be inundated for at least a month: thus then was I separated from this amiable stranger, of whom I have never since been able to obtain a sight, in spite of my anxiety and efforts to rejoin him.

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Here Dinarzade heaved a deep sigh, as if just relieved from some great oppression.

"A thousand thanks," she cried, raising her hands to heaven, "a thousand thanks to the satraps in chintz, the gilded palanquin, the slaves who bore it, the umbrellas which shaded it, and above all to the flageolets, fifes, cymbals, and bagpipes, which by frightening your camel, separated you from Facardin the Second! and oh! for ever blessed be the river, whose well-timed overflowing prevented you from falling in with him again! Had it not been for that fortunate accident, I doubt not you would have wearied us as intolerably with the end of his adventures, as you have already done with the beginning. For Heaven's sake, my dear prince, tell me at once, how many years it will take you to relate your history, and how many volumes may be made out of your secretary's journal; since though you have now trespassed upon our good Sultan's patience for a very considerable time, as you have employed it entirely in recounting the misfortunes of another person, while of your own I have not heard one syllable, I confess to you, that I begin to despair of ever hearing your history conclude."—

Luckily Schahriar—whose custom it was to have the soles of his feet tickled by his great chamberlain—had just then fallen into a gentle slumber, and therefore his sister-in-law's remarks for this time escaped him. Had it not been for this accident, there is reason to believe, that she would

not have got off with a simple reprimand. Facardin, indeed, who, to give him his due, was extremely good-humoured, hastened to prevent the Sultan's being aware of the interruption, and rescued Dinarzade from his displeasure by resuming his discourse.

"As during the latter part of my narration," said he, "the attention of your most august and victorious Majesty seemed to be drawn off, by some meditations no doubt of very serious public and political importance; in order to connect the broken threads of my story, I will just repeat the heads of what escaped you, while buried in your own profound reflections."

"Don't give yourself the trouble," answered the Sultan, "I have not lost a syllable; and to convince you of it, I remember, that while I meditated on the means of preserving the tranquillity of my subjects, and the prosperity of my dominions, you recited, how the palanquins, elephants, chintz curtains, and umbrellas, took to their heels, and dashed into the sea, as soon as your squires and their camels began to play upon their fifes and bag-pipes."

"Exactly so!" exclaimed Dinarzade; "the Prince of Trebizonde need only continue his history; and if ever your Majesty should take it into your head to repeat the whole in the style of the specimen, which we have just heard, I'll engage for its being the most curious narrative that ever was related in mortal hearing!"

"Silence!" said the Sultan; "I wish to give all my attention to the prince. Trebizonde, proceed."

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I was considerably vexed, continued Facardin, at my abrupt separation from the handsome stranger, not only because I had already imbibed a sincere attachment to him, but because I meant to have requested him to change his

name; lest the exploits by which I intended to make mine illustrious, should be ascribed indiscriminately to one or other of the only two Facardins existing. However, but a short time elapsed, ere I discovered that this precaution would have been of no avail.

Some persons have minds so inactive as to pass whole hours without opening their lips, and this more particularly happens when they are alone. For my part, never having been afflicted with that supineness of imagination, which leads people to meditate on the various objects which present themselves to travellers without discussing them by word of mouth, whenever I had nobody else to converse with, I held a conversation with myself. Sometimes I repeated a scene or two from some new play; sometimes I hummed a favourite air, and at other times I whistled it. In short, I made use of every source of amusement, which talents and an excellent education could supply, instead of wasting my time in building castles in the air, like the stupid dreamers to whom I just now alluded. It is true my secretary did not come under this description; but then he had another whim, which was not a jot more sensible or entertaining. Every twelve yards he halted, and drawing out a portfolio crammed full of his remarks, he busied himself with the utmost gravity in chalking down all the rivers, castles, wind-mills, mountains, and pigeon-houses, which he saw from the road. One day in particular he put me out of all patience.

"I wonder, Jessamin," said I; "I wonder, that with such a long beard hanging down to your girdle, you are not ashamed of being so childish as to keep eternally scratching and scrawling, when you might employ yourself so much better in remaining near me, listening to my discourse, and replying to my questions. Prithee, put up that bundle of

trash, and look in your list of perilous adventures, for that which happens to be nearest at hand; for in fact I am heartily weary of wandering about, as I have done, for these last three weeks, without knowing where I am, or whither going."

As I said this, we approached a bridge, which he was just then in the very act of drawing; nor was it without infinite reluctance, that he had consented to lay aside his employment. However, my orders being repeated, he prepared to obey me; when suddenly our camels began to whine, and sniff, and seemed to be seized with some violent panic. A moment after we heard the tuning of instruments, and immediately about half-a-dozen persons appeared at the other end of the bridge. They were all dressed in a sort of chintz uniform, and no sooner did they descry us, than they began to get their instruments in order and tune, by way of doing honour to our approach. Perceiving these musicians to be the same kind with those whom we had left in the forest, we begged leave by signs to decline the serenade, with which they were preparing to compliment us. They easily discovered by the violent agitation of our camels, that we made this request on their account. Unluckily the distress of these beasts appeared to the musicians so entertaining, that as they staggered across the bridge (for they were completely drunk) they thought proper to heighten it by an additional symphony. No sooner were the first notes audible, than my secretary's camel, recollecting the means by which he had just escaped, dashed into the river without hesitation; and while in hopes of gaining the opposite bank his master held fast by the neck, the curious memoirs of our travels, which he had not had time to put up, floated down the stream to our great discomfiture. With respect to *my* camel, the principal musician had seized him by the bridle, and the

others prevented him from rejoining his companion. When the poor beast found that all avenues to escape were barred, he dropped on his knees, trembling like an aspen; he shut his eyes, not being able to shut his ears, and sent forth such melancholy cries and groans, that I found it impossible to refrain from laughter; especially when I heard the other camel, affected by his friend's situation, answer him in the same pathetic strain from the opposite side of the river.

I sprang upon my feet; and the principal musician, who still held my camel's bridle, having persuaded his companions to withdraw (for he dreaded lest they should occasion some new alarm), conducted me across the bridge, frequently apologising for the insolence of these drunkards. He informed me that they belonged to a band, with the other members of which, he supposed, I had not come in contact; since, to judge from my camel's turn of mind, he thought, that had he heard them, the animal must have died of the fright, they being very numerous, and being positively ordered to play on all their instruments, as soon as a stranger appeared in sight. He added, that he had staid behind in order to collect these rascals together, who had separated themselves from the convoy, in order to drink at the different ale-houses on the road, and that he must hasten to rejoin the train of the princess.

"What princess?" said I.

"Moussellina the Serious," answered my new acquaintance; "who is returning to her father's dominions in hopes of laughing."

"Of laughing!" I exclaimed; "what can you mean?"

"I mean," replied he, "that she has been travelling about for these three months for the sole purpose of laughing, and it is for the sole purpose of laughing, that she now returns to her native land. But what a simpleton am I," he

continued, "to think it necessary to explain to you what you must know so much better than myself."

Thus saying, he hastened to rejoin his companions, as fast as he could lay legs to the ground. It was in vain that I called after him, begging him to come back, and satisfy my curiosity: he turned not his head towards me, and nothing could persuade my secretary to let me mount my camel and follow him; for Jessamin protested that he had rather die than be again in the power of that unmerciful music. We hastened, therefore, to escape from it; he lamenting the loss of his journal, and I, that of an explanation respecting the princess of Astracan. I might have passed the time till midnight in these reflections, had I chosen it, for my secretary kept at a considerable distance behind, probably endeavouring to set down the heads of the adventures which had been contained in his journal; but the silence which his reverie compelled me to observe becoming intolerable, I stopped, and waited till he came up with me.

"Jessamin," said I, as soon as he joined me, "look among your papers for the list of places, of which the enchantments and perils are likely to furnish me with some employment; I wish, as I told you before, to go immediately to those, which are nearest at hand."

"Look for it yourself," answered he, peevishly; "all my lists, journals, and papers of every description are following the course of the river, while I am following your Highness on this devil of a camel, who makes me every moment give myself up for lost; nay, he is even a great obstacle to my salvation, so often does he put me under the necessity of cursing both himself and our great prophet for introducing him into the world. If you like it, my lord, you are perfectly at liberty to follow these papers, which in fact are commentaries of our illustrious actions: for my own part, I

am not quite so great a fool as to run the risk of drowning in the attempt to fish them up. But for Heaven's sake, where is the use of scampering after adventures in your present equipage! Is it not clear that, however great may be your courage, there needs but a fiddle to make you run from one end of the world to the other? I would really advise you to restrain this violent thirst for glory which torments you, till you have a better chance of satisfying it. We are now within three days' journey of the Persian Gulf. In the city, which is enriched by the commerce of that sea, you may find the most beautiful horses in the universe: there, if your Highness will take my advice, you will get rid of these unlucky camels, and mount yourself according to the established fashion of knights-errant, instead of trotting about the world like Armenian merchants, or pilgrims on their way to Mecca."

I took his advice. On the third day after this passed, we discovered the banks of the Red Sea, having travelled without meeting with any fresh accident, that is to say, without falling in with any music by the way. The sun was just setting; and I beheld with infinite pleasure the variety of brilliant hues with which its rays tinged the surface of these waters. I could have sworn that a purple carpet had been spread over them; for the colour of the sea, and that of the light in which it sparkled, were mingled together in a manner at once the most splendid and beautiful. My secretary, who now kept close to me, asked whether I knew how these waters had obtained the appellation of the Red Sea; I answered, that I supposed it had been given them on account of their colour.

"Quite the contrary," said he; "they are no more red than you are; and since it will be an hour before we reach Florispahan, the capital of Arabia Petræa, I may as well employ the time in explaining this matter."

He had not time to begin his story, before something glittering, which appeared on the water at a considerable distance, attracted my attention. The sun was already sunk beneath the waves, and his last beams illuminating this object, we imagined, at first, that a golden hillock was floating towards us. As it approached, we could perceive an infinity of streamers fluttering in the wind, and at length ascertained that a bark was drawing near us, which was covered with gold from the extremity of the mast to the very surface of the ocean. It was conducted by two dwarfs, extremely black, and extremely deformed. As soon as it touched the shore, there came out a kind of nymph, more ornamented than heaven, and more hideous than hell. While I busied myself in conjecturing how it was possible to be at once so young and so ugly, she threw herself at my feet, and embraced my knees, before I could possibly prevent her.

"Invincible knight!" said she, "follow me, and preserve the most precious life that ever yet was given to a mortal! But first swear to me, that however dangerous may be the undertaking, that however disagreeable may be its conditions, you will not hesitate to attempt the deliverance of a beauty, more perfect than till now the universe could ever boast."

Here as she began to weep, I raised her from the ground, anxious to spare myself the wry faces, which she then thought proper to make: nay, I had already opened my mouth to give the oath required, when my secretary clapped his hand before it.

"Stay one moment, my lord," said he; "before you engage yourself, let me ask this young lady a few questions." Then taking off his bonnet, and shaking his long beard, "Either my name is not Jessamin," he continued, "or you come from the Crystal Island—am I right, sweetheart?"

"Hold your tongue, child," answered she; "my business is not with you, but with your master. Yes, amiable youth!" she added, "it is to you that I am sent. The paragon of beauty has just entered the bath, and unless you are so condescending as to see her come out of it, never must she enter it again! In defiance therefore of your page Jessamin, swear to follow me! Swear to me this, and in return may the dew of morning cool your sweet slumbers; may the zephyrs of evening breathe gently on your cheeks; and may the accents of your well-beloved be as favourable to your wishes, as the cock's crow is grateful to the ear of him, whose couch during the night sleep hath denied to visit!"

These prayers were so extremely kind and acceptable, that I could not think of rejecting the nymph's request. I took the oath which she tendered, and swore that, happen what might, I would not only see the lady whom she mentioned step out of the bath, but afterwards would do my utmost to effect her deliverance. My secretary no sooner heard me make this vow, than he judged it expedient to tear his hair, pluck out his beard by the roots, and utter groans and lamentations the most deplorable.

"Unhappy prince!" cried he; "what evil star conducted you hither to engage in an enterprise, whose event must either prove your ruin, or entail on you everlasting dishonour. None but a satyr, or the offspring of some Spanish fly, would dare even to think of an adventure, which you have sworn to attempt, but which I will take my oath, you will never accomplish! However, I have still one means in my power to release you from the vow, which you have just made so rashly!"

Thus saying, he drew his dagger, and rushed upon the ambassadress, no doubt intending to kill her. I had no difficulty in preventing this act of passion, or in finding words

to express how much I disapproved of his unmanly transport. However, so far was I from exciting his contrition, that seeing me on the point of embarking without him (such was the law of this adventure), and finding that I positively forbade his accompanying me, he gave way to an impulse of passion not less violent than unavailing.

"May the sea," he exclaimed, "swallow up the gilded bark, the furbelowed monkey who is just on the point of entering it, and the unfortunate Facardin, who is now preparing to follow her."

On hearing my name, my conductress examined me with a look of surprise, and asked me, if in truth my name was Facardin.

"Why should it not be so?" said I.

However, not satisfied with this answer, she addressed herself to my secretary, who was still weeping by the water's edge.

"Venerable Jessamin!" said she, "tell me the truth; is your master really called Facardin?"

Hoping that this would be of service to me, he called Heaven to witness, that such was my real name.

"Then let me away without loss of time," said she, "since I possess the invincible Facardin; but if this stranger is really he, what is become of the other half of him?"

Not understanding this question, I did not attempt to answer it. The gilded bark made its way with incredible swiftness, and soon losing sight of that shore on which the inconsolable Jessamin was still venting his lamentations, a quarter of an hour landed us upon another.

This was an immense rock, which rose in the midst of the sea. It appeared to be transparent, and as soon as we disembarked, I perceived that it was entirely composed of crystal. A female, more advanced in years, more splendid in dress, and

more frightful in feature than my conductress, came in all haste to receive us.

"Take courage!" cried the nymph of the bark, as soon as the new-comer was within hearing; "I bring what our charming mistress has sought for so long in vain. This is the great Facardin!"

"The great devil!" answered the other; "why, you must be mad, Harpiana, to mistake this shrimp for the invincible Facardin! But no matter. We shall soon see of what stuff this daring youth is composed; and as he seems likely to fail in the very preliminaries, we shall at least have the comfort of seeing him flayed, while they burn the unfortunate Crystallina! Has he taken the oath?"

"He has," answered the first scarecrow, "and so readily, that I am almost sorry for his fate."

"Disarm him then," rejoined the other, "while I announce his arrival to our charming mistress."

"Softly," said I; "a moment's patience, if you please, Miss Monster; let me inform you, that if you pronounce the word 'disarm,' a second time, I shall whip both your ugly heads from off your shoulders."

Thus saying, I displayed my sword: they seemed not a little confounded at a proceeding so unexpected.

"Conduct me," I continued, "immediately to this lady, whom I have sworn to protect, in order that without loss of time I may deliver her from a danger which appears to be so pressing. Truly, it would be extremely well-timed to give away my arms, when I come here for the sole purpose of fighting!"

"Flower of chivalry!" said she who had come to receive us, "do as we request, since resistance will be in vain. Give up your arms, and I swear to you by the prophet Ali, the original inventor of green turbans, that if you meet a single enemy with arms, yours shall be restored to you."

I suffered myself to be prevailed upon; and retaining only my sword, which nothing could induce me to relinquish, I followed wherever these damsels chose to lead me. In my way I observed a number of persons, the singularity of whose appearance surprised me not a little: they were men in female dresses, who being each provided with a spindle and distaff, were spinning with great application, as we passed along. I inquired the meaning of this humiliating masquerade. I was answered, that I was unlucky in not being permitted to increase their number; that all these persons had been adventurers like myself, who having taken the same oath, preferred passing their lives in this degrading situation to engaging in the enterprise at the risk of being flayed, if they failed to accomplish it; but that no choice was left for him who should present himself on the last day of the year (that space of time being allotted for the trial) except to attempt the deliverance of the lady, or be flayed without further delay.

"May I ask," said I, "the nature of this perilous exploit?"

"Our lovely mistress will inform you," answered one of my guides, "as soon as you are presented to her."

It would have been difficult to walk, and, indeed, to keep one's feet on an island of crystal, if the roads had not been strown with diamond dust. It was already night; nor should I have been able to distinguish the several objects which presented themselves, had not the rock been hollowed out with much labour in various places, where orange trees were introduced, from whose branches large crystal chandeliers and a profusion of burning lamps depended. This made the whole island as bright as if it had been day.

We were situated directly under the torrid zone, scarcely four degrees removed from the equinoctial line. The sun during the day had darted his rays full upon this immense

mass of crystal, the air was considerably heated, and not a breath of wind was stirring after twilight. Consequently, I was almost suffocated with heat by the time that I reached the other end of the rock. On the brink of it I perceived a square pavilion, in which both my guides advised me to take some repose. I found there all sorts of refreshment, and hastened to enjoy that of bathing, at the request of my attendants, who assisted me to undress, but who failed in persuading me to commit my sabre to their care, as I scrupled not to do my garments. In vain did they exert their lungs in assuring me that nobody in this world ever bathed sword in hand. All their remonstrances proved fruitless; I not only entered the bath, but came out of it in this warlike posture. A magnificent night-gown was immediately thrown over my shoulders; and while I ate of what was set before me, and appeased my thirst with cool and delicious wines, my clothes were carried off by my conductresses.

The day broke. After demanding my clothes without success, I was desired to set forward; and also was entreated once more to lay aside my clumsy, ill-looking scimitar, which would be totally useless in the business for which I was preparing.

"Prithee," said I, "talk no more about my scimitar. As it is, I want only a close cap, a distaff instead of a sword, and a jacket and petticoat, to be dressed like those wretches whom I saw in my way hither!"

Finding me deaf to all entreaties respecting the sword, of which they were so anxious to deprive me, they conducted me without more delay to a bridge, which connected the crystal rock with the most delightful meadow that I ever beheld. Here the two ladies left me. When I had crossed the bridge, two little negroes, even more deformed than those who had managed the bark, closed behind me a brazen barrier,

and with a low bow demanded my sword. I answered that this request being particularly disagreeable to me, if they mentioned it again I should be under the necessity of cleaving them from the head to the navel. This threat put them in such terror, that away they ran over the meadow like two black kids. I followed them without hurrying myself, till I came near a palace, which could not well avoid being transparent, for the walls were formed of the clearest and most beautiful plate glass that the world ever produced. Near this palace was raised, by means of golden pegs and cords of purple, a magnificent pavilion. I have since heard that it belonged formerly to the unfortunate Darius, of whom I have the honour to be a lineal descendant.

In this tent, which was open in the front, I perceived a bed, if possible more rich and elegant than that which now contains the charms of the divine Scherazade. These objects would not have given the most distant idea of a perilous adventure had they not been placed in a very disagreeable neighbourhood; for, to the right of the transparent palace, there was erected a pile of wood, evidently intended to burn some criminal; and on the left I observed a kind of altar, the four corners of which were provided with iron rings for the purpose of fastening the victim, and with sacrificial knives for the purpose of cutting his throat. Though I never could even form an idea what it was to be afraid, I confess a little kind of inquietude passed through my head like a vapour when I remembered what I had heard respecting the crystal rock. However, no person being in the tent, though the bed seemed prepared for somebody, I approached the little palace, and here the first light was thrown upon the singular adventure upon which I was engaged. Chance had conducted me to the bathing-room. To enter it would have been unnecessary, since I could distinguish perfectly well

through the walls what was passing within. Four negresses, more dingy, more flat-nosed, and less dressed than any to be found in the heart of Guinea, surrounded a marble basin, in which, according to all appearances, their mistress was waiting for my arrival to begin the adventure. As soon as they perceived me, these ladies-in-waiting ranged themselves in a line; and immediately the admirable Crystallina stepped out of the water with as few clothes on as it was possible to have without being stark naked. She remained in the midst of these four ugly old toads a considerable time before they could find anything with which to cover her. This piece of art did not escape me; but though I conceived that her complexion must be seen to great advantage while contrasted with the horrible figures around her, I own I was much struck with the dazzling whiteness of her skin; and I looked with contempt upon the perils of the enterprise while I reflected that this uncommon beauty would certainly feel some gratitude for the service which I hoped shortly to render her.

While such were my reflections, the lady and her attendants disappeared, I know not how. In a few moments after, one of the negresses came to say that her mistress, the heavenly Crystallina, that divinity whom I had just been so fortunate as to see bathing, waited for me in her apartment, where she was just gone to bed, and hoped that I would make haste to preserve her life by my politeness and generosity. Scarcely could I believe that this message, at once so flattering and so free, was not sent for the purpose of making a jest of me.

"The adventure may end as it pleases," said I to myself, "provided it begins as this obliging ambassadress gives me hopes that it will."

I followed her with great eagerness, and on her part she lost no time. I guessed that she was leading me to the

tent of Darius, and no sooner had I entered than it was surrounded by a troop of soldiers completely armed. The nymph Crystallina desired me to sit down for a moment at her bed's head; and being obeyed, she next rang a golden bell. Immediately an old man appeared, whose beard was at least three feet longer than my secretary's; in his left hand he held a scythe, and in his right a small clock, having placed which on the other side of the bed, he retired. To him succeeded two figures still more extraordinary. The first was a sort of high-priest, respectable from his habit, but of an aspect the most ferocious. Among his sacred ornaments was included a great butcher's knife, which was stuck in his girdle, and his beard was even longer than the one which I had just seen. The other was a blacksmith, at least so I supposed, from his having a hammer, a file, and a bag of nails; besides this he held a brazen hoop, on which was strung a variety of rings of different sorts. This hoop he fastened to an iron staple, which was fastened to the floor by a broad plate of gold. The lady from whom this mummery had drawn my attention now desired me to make the first effort towards her deliverance by bringing her one of those rings; that done, the adventure would be accomplished, and I should remain sole master of her person and her treasures. These words made me examine her again, but she was now too close for me to be as much charmed with her as I had been at first sight. In spite of the art which she had used to conceal her beauty's decay, she seemed to be much gone by. I suppose she thought that the suspicion of her being painted occasioned my surprise; for, in order to show me that she was not, she immediately took great pains to display her arms and bosom. This convinced me beyond a doubt that she was daubed from head to foot, and she

now disgusted me as much as she had enchanted me on her first appearance. However, as I had promised to undertake this adventure, and as all she wanted was one of these rings, I advanced towards the brazen hoop on which they were strung.

"Hold, my little friend," said the long-bearded archbishop, who now perceived that I was armed; "Hold!" said he in Arabic; "who taught you to appear sword in hand in a lady's bed-chamber? Down on your knees, young man, and give me that useless weapon without delay."

I cannot describe, magnanimous emperor, the fury which I felt at hearing this piece of insolence. However, I strove to repress it, lest I should betray myself into some impropriety.

"Mr. Parson!" said I, "what you have just said has been dinned into my ears by all the rabble of this place; and I now assure you, that if such another speech comes out of that bush which covers your face, I shall strike off your head, and convert it into a scrubbing-brush!"

In finishing this compliment I made my sword whistle twice or thrice about his ears. I soon perceived, that as all these islanders made the same request, my answer produced the same effect upon every one of them; for after ducking several times under my sword, my friend the high-priest took to his heels, and the blacksmith did not stay long behind him.

No sooner were they departed, than I hastened to end the adventure by bringing a ring to the fairy Crystallina, for I supposed that I might have one for the trouble of taking. But though I possessed more strength than the gods bestow upon many, it was in vain that I exerted it, and tried each ring separately; not one could I move. Piqued at a resistance which I did not expect, I redoubled my efforts, but

with no better success. At length, recollecting Alexander's method of dividing the Gordian knot, I was going to procure one of the blacksmith's files, when the nymph desired me to resume my place near her.

"It is not on exertions of this nature," said she, when I had obeyed her, "that my safety, and also your own depend. It is evident, that as you now employ it, no strength can obtain for me one of these rings; however, there is a way of disengaging them with as much ease as if the brazen hoop were open. Take breath while I explain it to you, and in the meanwhile examine with attention the furniture of this tent."

I threw my eyes round, and perceived besides the clock and the brazen hoop, a crystal wardrobe and two spinning-wheels. The lady perceiving that I was ready to hear her, addressed me in the following manner:—

HISTORY OF CRYSTALLINA

Nature bestowed on me those sentiments of prudence and virtue, which in others are merely the effects of education; but with them I also possessed a degree of curiosity, which I never could succeed in repressing. My mother, who wished to preserve me in all the purity of original innocence, suffered nothing male to approach our dwelling. In a short time my curiosity had no other object than the sight of a creature, of whom I only knew the name. In vain was that creature described to me as a horrible monster, who would devour me the moment that I met his eyes. My curiosity daily grew more urgent, and at twelve years old it was so violent, that I resolved to run away, and see a man, cost what it might. Accordingly, one night when the family was buried in sleep, I dropped from my window into the

garden, of which I next scaled the wall. I jumped down on the other side at the risk of my life; and all this trouble did I take in hopes of finding an animal, whom I expected to devour me! I ran like a mad thing across the plains, trembling lest I should be pursued and brought back; nor was it till my security was certain, that I sat down under a bush to rest myself, and wait for day.

Under this same bush a young pilgrim, whom the night had surprised, had also taken shelter.

This I did not discover till the dawn permitted me to distinguish the surrounding objects. He woke at the same time with me, and showed no less surprise than I did on finding himself near me. In spite of my curiosity I was then so uninformed, that I took him for a girl of my own age, whom I conjectured to be a foreigner from the difference of her head-dress and strange cut of her clothes; as to features, I thought (though I was quite as handsome then as I am now) that the stranger's face was even handsomer than my own. For some time we examined each other in silence.

"Amiable stranger!" said he at length, "if you understand my language, deign to inform me where I can find a woman. My father, who inhabits a desert abounding with wild beasts, and who has bred me to the chase from my childhood, permits my engaging bears, wolves, tigers, and wild-boars; but he forbids my trying my strength against that most dangerous of animals, the woman, for he assures me, that nothing can defend me against the poison which it carries about it. I begged him to tell me how this creature is made, in order that I may avoid it, but he would not oblige me: I then requested that I might have a young one brought up tame in the house, but this also was denied me. At length his repeated refusals augmenting my inclination

to see one of these dragons, about a month ago I escaped from my father, and have ever since been wandering through the most gloomy woods and frightful deserts in hopes of finding this animal. My search has as yet been fruitless; but as your dress declares you to be a foreigner, should there be any women in your country, be so good as to tell me how I may get a sight of one."

"And are not you one yourself?" said I, much surprised.

"No, truly!" answered he; "so you need not be afraid of me; and even should one happen to pass this way, my bow and arrow will be sufficient to protect us."

"But if you are not a woman," said I, "what are you?"

"A man like yourself," answered he.

In short, Sir Knight, after much surprise and many questions on both sides, our alarm was dissipated; we found what we had been seeking, and without my being devoured, or his being poisoned, our curiosity was satisfied.

This discovery pleased us so much, and we thought the deceit of our parents such an affront to our understandings, that we resolved to return to them no more. We concealed ourselves for some time in the very depth of the forest, persuaded that a strict inquiry would be made after us. We knew no other fear than that of being separated; and I submitted without difficulty, during the first two or three days, to subsist on the produce of my companion's chase, and to have no other retreat for the night than a tree or a cavern.

But my curiosity was not extinguished; it revived in my solitude, and I grew tired of my situation. I fancied that my new acquaintance was not the only man in the world; that though he was more beautiful than the day, the world might possibly furnish somebody even more to my taste; and this idea having once got into my head, I took care

to ease my heart of it. Accordingly I proposed to my companion that we should leave the wood, and see a little what was going on elsewhere. He desired no better, and we proceeded together till we arrived at the sea-shore. Neither of us had ever seen that immense element. You must certainly know that it is a very striking object when beheld for the first time, and we were both of us occupied in admiring it, when suddenly its surface was disturbed by a swell, which seemed to extend itself farther than our eyes could reach. At length a dark vapour ascended, which at first raising itself in the air, grew thicker as it fell again, and forming a cloud, was driven by a strong gust of wind to the place where we were standing. It wrapped itself round me like a cloak, and then hurried me away with it in spite of my lover's cries, whom I was compelled to leave behind. I perceived that I was borne along with great rapidity, but this gave me not the least uneasiness. I am naturally courageous, and was only angry with the fog, which, I doubted not, prevented me from seeing many things worthy my curiosity. Suddenly it dispersed; the sea opened, and I was swallowed up without suffering the least inconvenience. I now found myself in a spacious grotto, ornamented with that infinite variety of shells which the sea produces, and enriched with enormous pearls, as well as every sort of coral, which it conceals within its bosom. Before I could look about me and recover from my surprise, I saw the faithful Harpiana near me, the same person who brought you in the gilded bark from the shores of Florispahan to the crystal island.

She was dressed much after the fashion of the attendants of Thetis; that is to say, she was hardly dressed at all. This by no means set her off to advantage, for at that time she was, if possible, uglier than she is now. She informed me,

with a low courtesy, that I was welcome to an empire, whose sovereign had commissioned her to show me its wonders, and afterwards to conduct me where my arrival was anxiously expected. Having said this, she led me to a long gallery of crystal, whose roof was supported by two rows of columns covered with coral-branches and mother-of-pearl. When we had traversed it, my conductress inquired whether, before I ascended, I chose to see the gallery of shipwrecks. Perceiving that I did not understand her, she informed me, that we were then standing under the Red Sea; and that, this sea being the channel through which by continual navigation the treasures of India were conveyed to the other parts of the globe, it frequently happened that such as had enriched themselves by long labours, carried the fruit of them to the bottom of the sea, where the different presents made by tempests to the most greedy of elements, were carefully collected, and arranged with order in a particular apartment.

I, who never could deny anything to my curiosity, eagerly accepted this proposal. We now entered a room where heaps of gold, silver, and precious stones met my eyes on all sides: this saloon was so large, that I could not conceive how the whole earth had contrived to furnish the immense wealth which filled it. Having admired this magazine for some time, I was conducted into another, still more gratifying to my curiosity. This was a chamber less wide but much longer than the first. On one side were statues of gold, silver, bronze, and marble, with furniture of all kinds, and arms of every fashion, either valuable for their quality or exquisite workmanship. On the other side of this saloon stood a row of wardrobes, over each of which were the portraits of a man and a woman, with an inscription underneath. The dresses and ornaments of these portraits were

all of different countries. I bestowed so much time upon the first, that the nymph Harpiana informed me that her master's impatience to see me elsewhere would not admit of my making so long a stay as would be necessary for my examining the rest. She added, that in each wardrobe were the garments of those whose portraits were on the outside; that they were all illustrious persons of both sexes, who had perished by shipwreck; and that likenesses had been taken of the most distinguished, some having been restored to life, and others painted after their death.

"For example," said she, "two-and-twenty years have passed since I was drowned in company with the Sultana Fatima, the Grand Signor's favourite, who was carrying presents to Mecca. What followed? She was re-animated on account of her uncommon beauty, and I had the same good luck, in order that I might wait upon her. The Lord of this island loved her passionately, but all his power and skill could not long preserve her from the grasp of death; at the end of six months she was carried off by the small-pox, the only malady over which my master has no power. That is her portrait," added she, "and her clothes are in the same wardrobe."

She opened it, and showed them to me; nothing could be more splendid and elegant. While I examined them, she considered me with no less attention.

"It is the very thing!" said she; "your dress is unworthy of your person, and the Sultana's will be much more suitable. One would think they were made for you; I have already measured you with my eye, and on these points I never am mistaken."

The proposal was accepted. No sooner was I dressed than my lady in waiting thought me so lovely that she pressed me to hasten to take command of the empire of

which I was soon to be mistress, and with which I could not fail to be enchanted.

"You will there see the Genius of Genii," continued she, "and will see him at your feet."

"Shan't I see a man too?" interrupted I.

This question surprised her a little; but before she could reply, my demand was answered by the appearance of the personage whom she had mentioned, this Genius of Genii himself in his own person. Impatient to examine his new acquisition, he had transported himself (though how I know not) to the place where we were, instead of waiting for us above, as his dignity required. His looks surprised without alarming me; though his make was very different from the pilgrim's, whom I had found under the bush, I had not the least doubt of his being a man. It is true, the other was much handsomer, but then the other was not half so large. Reflecting therefore in my own mind, that man, of whom I had heard such terrible things, was an animal in his kind so excellent, I concluded that the more there was of him, the better he must be: this idea induced me, the first compliments being over, to accept the offers of the Genius, so ignorant was I at that time that it was necessary to preserve appearances.

This ceremony, the only one used in our marriage, being over, he gave me his hand (or rather his paw, for it was covered with long hair to the very tips of his fingers), and aided me in ascending a magnificent staircase. We stopped not, till we found ourselves on the same crystal rock which you traversed in your way hither. Thence I was conducted to this island, and our marriage was celebrated in this pavilion. I was soon disgusted with my new bargain, for the Genii are in general a very whimsical, cruel, ill-made sort of people, and above all are abominably addicted to

witchcraft. Though my spouse was naturally fickle, to me he was so eternally faithful and so insupportably fond, that I was ready to die of vexation. To this constancy he united an extravagant degree of jealousy, though of a kind quite peculiar to himself: he wished everybody to admire me; but it made him violently angry, if he suspected me of inspiring any more tender sentiments than admiration. He looked on me as a treasure, of which he was resolved to be the sole possessor; but he by no means chose to be the only person who could estimate that treasure's real value.

I passed my time very disagreeably with this wretch, whose caprices constrained and whose fondness disgusted me. Harpiana was my only consolation. She warned me to conceal an aversion, which her master and mine (dull as he was) might at length discover; and she advised me by redoubled complaisance to persuade him that I was distractedly in love with him, both on account of his personal and mental accomplishments; by which means I should find it an easy task to dupe him, whenever I found a proper opportunity.

I took her advice; and I soon established myself so perfectly in the confidence of the Genius my spouse, that by degrees I became the mistress of his dearest secrets. Among other things, he informed me that there were only three enchanters in the whole universe, whose power was equal to his own; that all three were his inveterate enemies; that each of them possessed a magic spinning-wheel, which in order to render them his slaves, it was necessary to put into the hands of the three most beautiful princesses in the world; and that as soon as these beauties should have spun long enough to make a cord able to reach from the top of the loftiest mountain to the surface of the sea, he should attain the utmost summit of his wishes. But till this desirable

event could be accomplished, he was in danger of losing the talisman, in which consisted the whole power of his enchantments. However, he added, this talisman was a mystery so well concealed, that there did not exist a human being who had the most distant suspicion of its nature.

He had no sooner said this, than I was dying to know in what this talisman consisted; and I flattered him so adroitly, and timed my caresses so well, that at length I became possessed of a secret which till then he had concealed with the greatest caution from every one.

From the little toe of one of his feet he suddenly displayed a monstrous and terrific *nail*, or rather claw, which he had the power of hiding at will, after the manner of lions. He then informed me that so long as this nail remained attached to his person, so long was he invincible; and that even in case of its being separated, it would be easy for him to rejoin it, and thus preserve his power undiminished, unless, before he could produce it, some one should swallow the whole separated limb down to the nail in question. He told me besides (for he was disposed to tell me everything, so perfectly was he fascinated by my caresses), that he had contrived to insinuate himself so artfully into the society of the possessors of these important spinning-wheels, that two of them were already the reward of his exertions; but that these were of little use, unless he could gain possession of the third, which of all the three was the point most difficult to compass.

Upon receiving this mark of confidence, I displayed such unbounded gratitude that my husband knew not by what means to express to me his delight and satisfaction sufficiently. Perceiving that the sky was overcast, and that the winds were beginning to whistle, he transported me to the summit of the crystal rock, in order that I might enjoy the entertainment of some shipwreck or other, which (he doubted not) would be

the fruits of the approaching storm. He told me that it was from the top of this rock that he discovered me for the first time, and caused his spirits to carry me off from the shores of the ocean. He then put into my hand a telescope, not so long as my finger, and yet so miraculously powerful that I could make out the most diminutive objects as distinctly as if they had been close to my feet.

I had no sooner placed the instrument to my eye, than I beheld a vessel in the open sea, the whole crew of which seemed to be already in extreme terror at the storm which threatened them, a single knight excepted. The face of this stranger was to the full as beautiful as that of my little pilgrim, and his size was almost as advantageous as that of my great booby, the Genius. Suddenly, the storm became so violent that the vessel was swallowed up by the waves, whose fury conspired with the raging of the winds. Not a man of the whole crew escaped, except that stranger, who had already fixed my observation, and who still disputed his life against the assaults of the hostile billows with efforts almost incredible.

The degree of interest and compassion with which this sight inspired me, was such, that I was almost out of my senses. The Genius thought that my transports were occasioned by the excessive delight which I received from this species of entertainment, and was the better pleased with me. He told me that what I had seen was nothing, and that he would furnish me with a much superior kind of amusement: with this assurance, he placed me in a small car upon wheels, taking his seat beside me. It was not without experiencing some uneasy sensations that I felt this machine put itself into motion, and precipitate us from a place, which I fancied to be the loftiest upon earth, into an abyss whose depth I trembled to measure. However, I had

not time for many reflections: in an instant I found myself in the crystal gallery; we had entered it at the same place by which I had penetrated into it on my first arrival. From this gallery we could see distinctly everything which passed, as far as the surface of the sea; that is, when the sea is calm, for at that time it was too much agitated to permit my distinguishing anything.

Some time after, we were informed that the tempest had produced nothing but a small bark, ten or twelve mariners, some naval stores, and a horse of value. The Genius, my spouse, having cast his eyes on these poor wretches, gave it as his opinion, that such sorry knaves were not worth the trouble of re-animating; he then begged my pardon for having given me an amusement so little worthy my attention; and to recompense me for my trouble in coming so far for it, he suffered me to examine that magazine at leisure, on which at my first visit I had only been allowed time to cast a passing glance. This was an employment exactly suited to my natural curiosity; and after examining the portraits and various habits of those whose spoils were deposited in the crystal wardrobes, I found infinite entertainment in perusing the histories of their owners. Charmed with the attention with which I examined these different relics, the Genius would gladly have multiplied his treasures and his curiosities, solely for the purpose of furnishing me with amusement; for, to say the truth, though he was immoderately jealous, he was by no means disobliging. On the contrary, you could not have found a Genius in the whole world more easy to live with, except when the tender passion was concerned.

He left me in the magazine, the faithful Harpiana being commissioned to explain to me such points as would otherwise have been unintelligible. I was gratified by this permission to prolong my examination of the wardrobes

and their contents, for it was seldom that he would trust me out of his sight; and when he *did* leave me for a few minutes to myself, it was only for the purpose of preparing for me some entertainment or other, which sometimes astonished, but never was able to please me.

I cannot tell you how ardently I wished that the sea would bring to us, dead or alive, that unfortunate stranger, who alone had survived for a few minutes the shipwreck in which his companions had perished. I had the greatest desire to take a nearer view of a man who, even at such a distance, had appeared so charming; for I have already told you, to what an excess I am governed by curiosity! However, it was in vain that I raised my eyes every moment to the surface of the waters. The calm, which now smoothed them, still offered nothing interesting to my sight; and my husband's messengers, who examined every part of the surrounding abysses, returned without discovering more than the miserable remains of the shipwrecked vessel.

The entertainment prepared for me by the Genius detained us in the crystal gallery the whole of that night. The next day we amused ourselves with fishing for dolphins on the coast of the crystal island. Nothing can be more diverting than this mode of fishing.

A band of excellent musicians (perhaps the best to be found in the universe, as well in point of voice as instruments) was on board the vessel by which you, Sir Knight, were conveyed hither. As soon as it reached the open sea, the music struck up in perfect harmony. The dolphins, who of the whole fishy tribe have the most curiosity, came flocking from all quarters round the glittering bark, in order that they might have a nearer view of it; and as they have a still more decided taste for music than even for shows, they followed the concert in profound silence, without

perceiving (so attentive were they to the sweet sounds) that the bark insensibly conducted them into a long chain of nets, which lined the whole extent of the shore.

However, this adventure did not produce any very bad consequences to them: it only cost a few of the most beautiful their liberty. The Genius ordered them to be deposited in some superb reservoirs, where he amused himself with superintending the education of these illustrious fish.

When the bark returned for the third time with its capture, one of the fishermen came to inform us, that in this last hawl he really believed that they had caught the king of the dolphins; so heavy were their nets, and so brilliant were the variegated scales, which they saw sparkling through the water. But what was my surprise, when instead of this magnificent fish which we expected, I saw enveloped in the nets the very same stranger whose composure during the tempest, and whose courageous exertions afterwards, I had witnessed with such admiration: the armour, in which he was arrayed, was enamelled with gold and azure, and ornamented with an infinite number of precious stones of all kinds and colours.

The Genius, my husband, who knew nothing about generosity, immediately ordered the fishermen to despoil him of his brilliant arms, and then cast him back again into the sea. I looked round for my faithful Harpiana to implore her by looks, that she would find some means of evading the execution of this command; but she was not to be seen, and I was on the point of interfering myself, when we were informed that the stranger still possessed some remains of life. Upon this, the Genius, who wished to learn his history, in order that it might be engraved upon the wardrobe in which his spoils were to be deposited, ordered his attendants to assist in recovering him. To

rescue his life was to preserve mine, so warmly did compassion interest me in his behalf. The succour which was given him, proved so efficacious, that he soon opened his eyes, recovered his spirits, and was upon his legs in less than an hour.

The sight of the Genius appeared to surprise, but not to alarm him. He easily comprehended that everything which he saw in these enchanted regions belonged to this extraordinary figure. He cast his eyes upon me, but instantly turned them away again, aware that both of us were in the power of one who was near enough to observe all his actions: what effect this single look produced upon the stranger, I cannot pretend to say; but as to myself, it did my business effectually! He now returned my husband thanks for the assistance which he had just received, in a manner which, without having any thing degrading or servile, was full of gratitude and insinuation. It quite softened the Genius. For my part, this compliment appeared to me so ingenious, that I almost fainted away through admiration.

The stranger now proceeded (without giving us time to question him) to inform us, that his desire to achieve so famous an undertaking, had induced him to embark at the port of Florispahan, for the purpose of visiting the Court of Moussellina the Serious; less indeed from any inclination excited by her reputed beauty, than on account of the glory to be acquired in an adventure so perilous: that on the fourth day of his voyage a dreadful tempest had destroyed his vessel and all his attendants, without his being able to comprehend by what means he had been brought near enough to these hospitable shores to receive assistance; and finally, that he should feel but little regret at having been shipwrecked, since this trifling accident had been the means

of his reaching the dominions of the most magnificent and best-made sovereign in the universe, if it were not that he saw a woman in his company, of all creatures upon earth the one for which he had the greatest antipathy.

This speech, aided by the stranger's agreeable manners, could not fail to be well received by my Genius, for the brute was no less greedy of flattery than subject to jealousy; and from that moment he took such delight in the stranger's conversation that he could not exist without him. On the other hand, the stranger affected to shun me on all occasions; nay, when the Genius (who seldom quitted me) desired him to join our party, he always turned his back towards me, and during the whole time that he remained with us, never addressed to me a single syllable of his conversation. This behaviour made me quite desperate; for the more that such marked unpoliteness proved that he detested me, the more desirous was I of pleasing him. The Genius was ready to die with laughing, when he saw the constraint which his guest seemed to suffer in my presence. He sometimes rated him severely for his aversion to a sex which makes the whole happiness of mankind, and repeated, till he was hoarse, the assurance, that if the knight would but once look me full in the face, he was persuaded that his aversion would be overcome.

The very idea was sufficient to make the stranger run away from the place where I was, as if something most horrible had been proposed to him. At last, so much importunity was used with him, that he consented to look at me once, on condition that he should never be asked a second time. Nor did I neglect to make a great many objections; as well to mark to the stranger, how much his conduct had displeased me, as to impose upon my husband by the appearance of extreme delicacy: so that the Genius

was obliged to hold my head forcibly between both his hands, to prevent my avoiding the glances of his favourite. Oh! if I *had* avoided them, how much I should have lost! While my jolter-head of a Genius laboured with both his body and soul to give his friend a fair look at his wife's charms, the eyes of the charming stranger were doing their duty: they assured me that he was dying for love of me, and that all these marks of antipathy were assumed. This first scene over, its inventor exultingly inquired, what effect the sight of me had produced upon his guest?

"An effect so disagreeable," answered he, "that if it were to happen frequently, I should utterly lose my senses! I even doubt whether, in the violence of my delirium, the goddess, your wife, would herself be secure against my transports!"

I thought I understood the meaning of these threats, and from that moment I felt the greatest inclination to see myself the object of one of these frantic fits; and all this through pure curiosity!

The Genius, however, was exceedingly surprised to find that the sensibility of the stranger's heart, instead of yielding on this trial, had only been converted into frenzy. He told him that he was resolved to carry the point; that he would prove to him, that a woman like me was not a person to be despised; and that, since the charm of my face had failed to produce the expected effect, those of my whole person, from head to foot, must be called in to their assistance. Was it possible, Sir Knight, for a jealous husband to carry his extravagance further? Our charming guest appeared to change colour at this declaration, and requested permission to depart that instant, since he preferred leaving the island, rather than consent to give proofs of his complaisance so extremely disagreeable. The better to deceive him, the stupid Genius gave him a promise, that in future

he should be let alone, and that no further mention should be made of me and my charms, since he was so horror-struck at a proposal which he would not have made to any other man in the universe. But all these assurances (as I said before) were only made for the purpose of deceiving his friend the more artfully; and this was the plan which he adopted.

He caused a cabinet of crystal to be made, exactly similar to that which you see yonder. He placed it in the magazine of shipwrecks among the others, after covering it with a curtain of green taffety embroidered with gold. This done, he disclosed his plan to me, which was to shut me up stark naked in the cabinet; but for fear of accidents, he took care that no one but himself should be able to let me out. I was ready to die with desire to communicate this fine project to the stranger; but I never could contrive it, so eternally was I teased by the presence of my everlasting Genius. But as the stranger had more wit and penetration than all the strangers in the world put together, I have no doubt but he guessed something of this premeditated surprise, and you will soon see the consequences.

Everything being prepared for this new scene, the Genius, in order to bring it about the more naturally, thought proper to ask his illustrious guest whether, according to the usage of other knight-errants, he had not provided himself with armour previous to his setting out on his expedition. The other replied that he well remembered being completely accoutred on the day of his shipwreck; but he was ignorant what had since become of his arms, his sword only excepted, which those who found him had kindly left in his possession.

"Well then!" said the Genius, "to-morrow I will show you the only place in the island which you have not yet seen since your arrival here. Perhaps this place may afford

you some news of your armour; at any rate, you will see something or other well deserving your attention. I will leave you alone there, lest my presence should oblige you to hurry over the examination of many rarities, which ought to be revised at leisure; and I would lay a wager that you never saw anything more curious than what is contained in the glass cases, which you will find ornamented with portraits, and inscribed with the names of those whom they represent."

"And I would lay a wager," replied the stranger, "that there is not among all those names a name half so curious as my own."

"And pray then," inquired the Genius, "what makes this name of yours so curious?"

"Its novelty," he answered; "I am called Facardin, and I do not believe there is another person of that name to be found in the universe."

"Oh, as to that, I am quite of your opinion," said the Genius; "but my good friend Facardin (since Facardin *is* your name), in every other respect, I am sure, that you will be quite of mine."

The next day, my jealous spouse locked me up with his own hands in the crystal cabinet. I was in the state which I before mentioned; and the Genius failed not to expatiate upon the astonishment which the sight of me would give the stranger, and the amusement which I should receive in witnessing his consternation. I was quite in despair to find that the cabinet was transparent to no purpose, since there was no possibility of unlocking it, either from within or from without. The curtain was drawn before it; and now the Genius without loss of time conducted his guest into the apartment where I was inclosed, and, according to his promise, immediately left him to himself.

In spite of my vexation at finding myself shut up without any means of escaping, my heart palpitated with impatience, principally from reflecting that while occupied in examining the other glass-cases, the handsome Facardin might pass mine over, or might not think of drawing away the curtain by which I was concealed. But my uneasiness was soon removed: he came directly towards it; and without losing the time which my brute expected him to bestow upon the survey of the rest, he drew away the curtain, and appeared so much charmed with the manner in which I was presented before him, that after a few unavailing efforts to free me in a more peaceable manner, in two blows of his sword he broke my fragile prison into a thousand pieces.

As he did not intend to render me this service without reward, and as my heart was filled with a decent sense of gratitude, his curiosity confined itself to those wonders whose knowledge had been forced upon him with so much perseverance; mine too was so perfectly satisfied, that I thought the whole merit of all the pilgrims and all the geniuses under the sun, must certainly be contained in the only Facardin whom the universe could produce. We soon arranged the characters which it was necessary for us to play, in order to account for the demolition of the cabinet, and we settled our proceedings for the future: though this last precaution was quite useless, as you will soon see.

The charming stranger now took his brilliant arms from the place in which I told him that they had been deposited: arrayed in them, he seemed to be the god Mars, who, quitting the Queen of Beauty, carried away with him all the loveliness of her son. I already mentioned, that he was almost as tall as the Genius; but this towering stature was by no means a disadvantage, when accompanied by such admirable proportion of limbs. He now left the

saloon of shipwrecks, his sword in his hand. The Genius was extremely surprised at seeing him in complete armour; but he was much more so, when after complaining bitterly of the trick which had been played him, he proceeded to tell him, that as soon as he had removed the green curtain, and seen behind it the statue of a woman without clothes, he was so much shocked, that in the first movements of his indignation he broke the niche in pieces, and was afraid that he had done the statue some injury by a heavy blow, which he had given it with his sword.

Nothing more was necessary to frighten my amorous Genius almost out of his senses, and without replying he ran to my assistance. When he arrived, he found me extended upon the floor, and apparently in a swoon. However, on seeing that I had not received any wound, his fears were tranquillised; and as soon as I did him the favour of coming to myself, he laughed ready to split his sides at the recital which I gave of the stranger's fury, and of the terrible fright into which his brutal behaviour had thrown me. However, he was by no means pleased that his guest had not given himself sufficient time to examine the whole catalogue of my perfections, before he broke the crystal cabinet; for my husband's ruling absurdity was an anxiety to make the whole world know the value of a treasure, of which he was himself the sole possessor. I could read in his countenance the determination to bring us together again by some new stratagem: but fortune ordered things differently. From that day the charming Facardin was not to be found, either on the island which we inhabited, nor on the crystal rock, though during a whole month both were searched for him with the greatest diligence.

The vexation which his loss occasioned me was so violent that I was scarcely to be known for the same person. The

merit of him, whose absence I regretted, was of itself sufficient to produce this effect upon me; still I fancy that curiosity had a still greater influence; and I strove in vain to console myself for having lost the opportunity of ascertaining whether this stranger would have been as agreeable in a second interview, as I had found him in a first. As the complaisance of my Genius was quite inexhaustible, the ennui to which he saw me a prey afflicted him extremely. He took it into his head that change of air would be good for me, and that in order to amuse me and restore me to my former state of health, nothing would conduce so much as travelling. I was delighted with the plan; but I was not equally well pleased with the precautions which accompanied its execution. He caused a crystal cabinet to be made, similar to that in which I had already been inclosed; it is the same which you see yonder. He shut me up (but for this time with my clothes on), took me upon his shoulders, and commenced his travels by traversing the bottom of the ocean. Occasionally we landed to repose ourselves, and take refreshments in the most delightful spots which the shores afforded. On these occasions he never failed to let me out of my glass-case, and resting his head upon my lap, he generally sank into such profound sleep that I had the greatest difficulty to rouse him when it was time to recommence our journey.

I had flattered myself at setting out, that during my travels fortune might enable me to gain some intelligence of the excellent Facardin; but on this head I obtained no kind of satisfaction: and as I was out of all patience at being of no other use in the world than to serve this brute of a Genius for a bolster, I called to my succour that curiosity with which nature has so plentifully endowed me. It suggested to me the doubt, "whether I could possibly

contrive to deceive a jealous husband, who always carried me upon his back well packed up when he was awake, and who when he was sleeping, always slept upon my lap?" I answered my curiosity, "that I would immediately satisfy it, whether the thing was practicable, or not." With this view I tried whether I could manage to draw my knees from under his ugly head. Finding that I effected this without the least difficulty, and that I could go whither I pleased, for whole hours together, without his ever stirring from the place where I had left him, I seized the very first opportunity of trying whether I could not carry the remainder of my project into effect. I succeeded; and this appeared to me so amusing, as well from the singularity of the thing as for the gratification of my vengeance, that my curiosity (which was always fertile in novel ideas) persuaded me to persevere in these innocent trials of my skill in artifice, till I arrived at the hundredth infidelity. I guessed that I should find infinite entertainment in the different excuses and cowardly terrors of those whom the presence of the Genius would of course inspire with extreme alarm. I always carried with me yonder hoop, which you see loaded with rings; they belonged to the persons who assisted me in tricking the vigilance of the Genius, and of whom there was not one who was not heartily terrified. But above all, the two last were the most cowardly chicken-hearted knaves that I ever met with in the course of my existence.

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"Trebizonde, my good friend," cried the Sultan, interrupting him, "what was that you said last?"

"Mighty lord," replied the prince, "I said that the virtuous Crystallina informed me, that having carried her adventure as far as the ninety-eighth, she received the two

last rings, which completed the hundred, from two poor cowardly devils, who almost expired through fright."

"She lied!" said the Sultan; "but go on with your history: we will discuss that point another time."

In obedience to his Sovereign's commands the Prince of Trebizonde proceeded to state, that the Nymph of the Rock continued her narrative as follows:—

. . . . . .

The hoop being now furnished with the complete number of rings which I had resolved to accumulate, I grew weary of playing tricks to an animal so jealous and so stupid, and I determined to find some new entertainment for my curiosity. But Fortune, who had favoured me so long, turned her back upon me when I was least prepared.

We had returned home four months and a few minutes; and I was not sorry to find myself in a prison less narrow than that in which I was confined during my travels. The rock of crystal, the pavilion in which we are at present, and the palace of shipwrecks, were all places whose variety presented me at every turn with the most unusual charms: but above all the rest, the saloon which contained the crystal cabinets was the most agreeable to me, on account of its recalling the recollection of the admirable Facardin. One day I had shut myself up in it with Harpiana, in order that we might talk of that regretted hero without interruption. Harpiana had never seen him; but being entirely in my interests, she was extremely anxious to obtain a sight of him, charmed with the wonders which I related, both respecting his person, and the very genteel manner in which he conducted himself towards me.

We were quite at a loss how to obtain any intelligence of him: for though she had an infinity of sense, and my curiosity furnished me with a thousand expedients, still we

never could effect our purpose, surrounded as we were on all sides by the ocean.

"If we had but a sword," said she, "I would go in pursuit of him myself."

"And why is a sword so necessary?" I inquired.

"Because," replied Harpiana, "the golden bark is the only vessel to be found here; and this always remains motionless, except when the Genius himself touches it with his wand, or when any person enters it sword in hand. Now, as we have neither the one nor the other, it is useless for us to think about the golden bark."

I know not what I intended to do with the rings, of which I had made such a fine collection: but it happened that I always carried them about me, without ever thinking of examining them. One day I took it into my head to satisfy this unlucky curiosity, and while I was thus employed, the Genius surprised me.

I was extremely confused. My embarrassment appeared suspicious to my husband. He was astonished at the number of the rings, and asked me how I came by them. As I observed the strange and sudden alteration of his countenance, I was thoroughly aware that this question was dictated by the true spirit of jealousy; and as there is no animal in the whole world so ugly and so terrible as a jealous husband who asks questions, I threw myself at his feet without delay, and requested his forgiveness of a crime which I had *not* committed, in order to conceal from him the fault of which I was really guilty. Accordingly, I confessed that I had stolen them from the cabinets in which the spoils of persons shipwrecked were deposited.

This confession augmented his suspicions; for he had himself laid all those rings aside in another place, and he was certain that there were not above fifteen of them or twenty

at most; while on the hoop which he had taken away from me, the number amounted to a full hundred. He examined them one after another, without finding what he was in search of. However, I was so frightened after the detection of my first lie, that I scarcely knew what I said afterwards; and he at length guessed so dexterously all the circumstances of my transgressions, that he pronounced my sentence upon the spot. He condemned me to be burned alive at the end of a year, unless in the course of it I could find some adventurer who would remove from the brazen hoop in a single night all the rings which I had acquired during the whole of my travels. No human effort could get them off except one after another; and it was only in the same manner by which they were obtained, that they could be made to move from the places in which, before the trial was made, the Genius took care to fasten them.

Such was the monster's decree! His servants were charged to see it executed. He disappeared himself, being engaged by some undertaking whose nature I have forgotten. Ever since, I have sought for a person who, by rendering me so slight a service, would save my life; but all those whom the golden bark has conducted hither, have basely refused to try the adventure. I always hoped that among those whose succours Harpiana implored without intermission, she might at length meet with the invincible Facardin. He, I am persuaded, would accomplish this adventure: but in vain have I flattered myself with these fond hopes; Fortune refuses him to my prayers, and hitherto has only conducted to this pavilion the miserable wretches who preferred the occupation and dress in which you saw them, for the remainder of their effeminate existence, rather than even hear of the enterprise in question, after they had seen me come out of the bath. Doubtless, you are already informed of the other conditions, and of every-

thing which relates to them. Time presses; you are informed of the whole affair; it is now only necessary to know your determination, in order that the clock may be set: for twelve hours only are allowed you to finish the adventure. Yet surely to judge by your appearance, to so valiant a knight twelve hours will be more than sufficient, and I shall eternally confess myself indebted to you for my life.

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Such was the narrative of the modest Crystallina; such was the proposal with which she finished it, and my answer was, word for word, as follows:—

"Fair lady, I promise to do all in my power to deliver, or at least to assist you. My object is to fight your enemies, not to make love to yourself. Without vanity, I may say that I should find it as easy to finish this adventure in another way as by the force of arms; but as glory invites me to employ my sabre, and as your beauty, all wonderful as it is, does not tempt me to display my prowess in any other manner, I shall immediately cut myself a passage through your butcher, your clockmaker, your blacksmith, your female Moors, your convenient Harpiana, her hideous companions, and the whole mob of your spinning ragamuffins. Now, then, make up your mind whether you will accompany me or not. If you choose to share my fortunes, I will save you from the perils with which you are menaced at the hazard of my life. On the other hand, if you prefer remaining here, in order that you may betray me, I give you my word of honour that, in case of my being attacked, the first head which I cut off shall come from your shoulders."

The lady between the sheets seemed almost frightened out of her senses at this threat. She sprang out of bed, embraced my knees, and assured me that she desired nothing better than to follow me through the world. However, she implored

me to listen to her advice, which would facilitate my enterprise. She then returned to her bed, and told me that she was going to ring the bell at three different times; that, at the first tingle, the person whose business it was to set the clock would not fail to make his appearance, in order to perform his office; that, at the second, the locksmith would arrive to see how many rings were already taken off from the brazen hoop; and that, at the third, the sacrificer with the long beard would come running to release me, in case I had accomplished the adventure, or (supposing me to be found unable to complete it) to deliver me over to his servants, till he had leisure to flay me himself; that these three personages were the most distinguished, the most cruel, and the most dangerous of all those whom the Genius her husband had left to guard her and execute his orders; and that, having enticed them into the pavilion one after another in the manner which she had just explained, I should be able to do with them whatever might seem to me the best to be done.

"But still," continued she, "though you are sufficiently convinced that violent means cannot enable you to open the enchanted hoop, you may have some doubts whether gentle methods would or would not be more effectual. Therefore, if you like it, you may satisfy your curiosity in this respect, before you have recourse to the other extremity."

"My curiosity?" said I. "Ring, ring, my Lady Crystallina; my disposition is not quite so curious as yours."

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"I never heard a better thing in my life!" cried the Sultan; "that is exactly what I should have said myself in your situation; for the more that women are curious, the more it behoves us men to show that we are exempt from such a weakness! But, pray, go on; your narrative is so entertaining, that I could pass all my life in listening to you.

Well, then, you were standing by the bedside of the Nymph of Crystal, in your night-gown and slippers, and with your sword in your hand, when you told her to ring the bell. You see that I forget nothing. Now, let us hear what happened afterwards."

. . . . . .

Being accoutred, resumed the Prince of Trebizonde, exactly as your most sagacious Highness has just described, I placed myself near the door of the pavilion; but I chose such a position that the gentlemen whom we expected could not possibly see me till they should have passed the threshold. The curious fair one now tingled her bell, the clockmaker did not fail to make his appearance, and I did not fail to chop his head off. I served the locksmith in the same manner; and I signified to the nymph by signs that she should now summon the grand sacrificer. In reply she raised her right hand, and, talking with her fingers, she explained to me, that the two officers whose business I had just done for them were appointed to enter the pavilion much about the same time to execute their several functions; that is, the one to set the clock, and the other to count the rings as they came off the enchanted hoop. They had also the privilege of remaining in the pavilion during the whole adventure; but she gave me to understand that it would be ridiculous to ring the bell a third time so soon, since the sacrificer could not possibly believe that the enterprise was already accomplished; and still less, that if the attempt was abandoned in despair, that he should be summoned before there was any necessity. She therefore represented to me that it would be most prudent to wait three or four hours, which would allow us sufficient time to make an opening in the back part of the pavilion, through which we might escape during the obscurity of the night, with less difficulty than by the door, which was always surrounded by a

multitude of guards in complete armour. Having given this advice, she let fall the hand with which she had been discoursing.

As my right hand was employed in holding my sabre, I was obliged to make my answer with the left; but, indeed, I can talk as easily with the one as with the other. I replied, that Facardin of Trebizonde was not used to make his escape by breaking out of a back door through fear of danger; that I would have nothing to do with her aforesaid opening; and that if she did not immediately ring the bell for her Jack Ketch of a pontiff, I was determined to set out in search of him, and send him to join his two scurvy companions.

I no sooner ceased to speak—that is to say, to move my fingers—than hers resumed the conversation. She said that if such was my determination, she at least conjured me to take one of the spinning-wheels in my left hand by way of a buckler; for that the satellites of the Genius, who would infallibly oppose my passage, bore such profound veneration to these machines, that they would sacrifice their lives rather than run the risk of breaking what they knew to be so precious to their necromantic master. This piece of advice was not so disagreeable to me as her former counsels. Accordingly, I laid hold of the spinning-wheel which was nearest; and the virtuous Crystallina, jumping out of bed and seizing the other, implored me to set forward without waiting for the enemy's arrival; since, by this means we should stand the better chance of taking them by surprise, and when they were least prepared for an attempt so desperate.

I did not contradict her. We quitted the pavilion of Darius; and the astonishment of the guards who surrounded it was so great, that I cut down five or six before they had time to recollect themselves. The rest betook themselves to flight, howling most horribly, and I pursued them with rather too much ardour; for the grand sacrificer, whom I

happened to have left behind while I went forward to look for him, quitted the altar which he had prepared for me, and came running after me with a dozen of his attendants, each provided with a great chain for the purpose of binding me neck and heels. Crystallina warned me of my danger by a loud exclamation, which made me turn round. No one dared to approach her, because she took care to cover herself with the awful spinning-wheel; and besides this protection, she spun with all her might and main when she found her danger become very urgent. This was an action which the boldest of our enemies dared not behold without prostrating themselves upon the earth; and during one of these humiliations I took an opportunity of slicing off the head of the confounded high-priest, without respect for the length of his beard or the sanctity of his office.

This once accomplished, what followed was rather a rout than a combat. I killed as many as I could reach, without trifling away my time in making prisoners; and having traversed the crystal rock without meeting with the slightest obstacle, I assisted the wife of the Genius to enter the golden bark. I followed her into it; and no sooner was I on board than the vessel sailed away as if it had been mad, without asking us whither we chose to be carried. I must not conceal from your Highness, that my joy at having accomplished this adventure was so great, that till we were out at sea I did not recollect my armour. It appeared to me quite disgraceful to leave it behind me by so precipitate a retreat. And being unwilling that the Genius on his return should convert my arms into a trophy of my flight, I endeavoured to steer the vessel back to the place which we had just quitted. But the bark paid no attention to me, and in spite of all my exertions we soon reached a landing-place, where we found an abundance of good company, as you will see in the progress of my narration.

I told you that I was extremely vexed at not having been able to regain the crystal rock, in order that I might have rescued my armour; but my distress was very different, when I perceived that the bark sailed straight towards a shore, which was covered with a multitude of people, some on horseback, some on foot, but most of them superbly armed and accoutred. I could also distinguish in the distance a number of tents and pavilions, raised in the middle of an extensive plain, and surrounded with lofty trees, whose boughs formed over them a shade, cool, thick, and delicious.

These knights, as well as the populace, astonished at the sight of us, were all assembled on the margin of the sea, and employed in contemplating us with their telescopes, while they expressed increasing astonishment, in proportion as we drew nearer to the shore. I was so completely out of humour at finding myself obliged to disembark in the middle of this assembly (my companion a lady in her shift, myself with a drawn sword and in my night-gown and slippers, and our whole freight consisting in a couple of spinning-wheels), that I was tempted to throw myself into the sea, rather than land in a situation so ridiculous.

To land, at last, however, there was no avoiding. So great was my confusion, that I was really to be pitied. I hung down my head; I dared not lift my eyes from the ground, and I knew not where to conceal myself; but the lady was not in the least put out of countenance. She no sooner landed than she began to put her spinning-wheel in motion; and though this action did not inspire such extreme respect as was the case in the Crystal Island, nevertheless those who had witnessed our disembarkation did not fail to assemble round her.

I expected that our reception would have been accompanied by loud bursts of laughter and a thousand jests and

sarcasms; but finding myself mistaken, I took courage, and on raising my eyes I was surprised to see that all the men of distinction were accoutred in a mode to the full as ridiculous and extraordinary as myself, though in different manners.

Three of those whom I had seen on horseback now alighted, and advanced to receive us. The sight of two of them first drew a cry of astonishment from Crystallina, and then threw her into such fits of laughter, that she almost burst her sides: I could not resist following her example. The knight, who first addressed me, told me with great politeness that I did nothing to any purpose, unless I fell to spinning with my own hands. This person was the tallest and best made man that I ever beheld. On his head he wore a fish-kettle instead of a helmet, and by way of a sword a huge spit was dangling at his left side; but the rest of his dress was brilliant with azure, gold, and gems of incalculable value. His strange dress, and the gravity with which he delivered his remonstrances, would have forced a smile from a criminal upon the rack.

"I need not ask," he continued, "whence you now come; the golden bark, the princess who accompanies you, and your sword still crimsoned with the blood of a terrible adversary, sufficiently assure me, that both in war and love you are one of the most valiant combatants in the universe, and I congratulate you on your success. But for your present adventure, it is not enough to be a hero; you must also be a buffoon. To be able to make blood flow is a great point; but it is a much greater to be able to make faces! Let me therefore advise you to take the wheel from the hands of your companion, and favour us with a specimen of your spinning."

I was in doubt how to take this sarcastic counsel, when

my companion (as he called her) came running towards him with open arms.

"Ah!" she exclaimed, "my ever-adored Facardin! Does then fortune at length relent, and restore you to the unabated impatience of my first curiosity?"

"Crystallina the Curious," replied he, repulsing her caresses; "different objects suit different seasons; at present your affairs are not the point in question. What climate throughout the world is ignorant of the conditions of a charm, which this renowned warrior has broken, and what curiosity would not now at length be satisfied?"

The kind-hearted Crystallina seemed to be somewhat mortified by this reception. However, she was not cast down. On the contrary, with equal rapture she ran to embrace the second knight, though with no better success. He did not even honour her with a look, but repulsing her even more harshly than the other, he turned round and addressed himself to me. He was more lovely than day, and his dress was as follows:—

His brows were encircled with a leather band in the shape of a diadem, from which rose an innumerable quantity of streaming feathers. He wore a cuirass of polished steel, and round his waist was fastened a leather apron tolerably dirty. In one hand he held an awl, in the other a cobbler's last, and at the end of a rope all daubed with pitch hung a shoeing-horn. Just as he opened his lips to address me, the third approached to make his bow. I easily understood that Crystallina had no knowledge of this last knight, for her curiosity furnished her with nothing to say to him; still his dress and appearance would have excited the curiosity of any other person.

His stature was by no means lofty, not to say that it was extremely low. He wore a casque which imitated to per-

fection the head of a cock, the comb forming the crest. On each arm was a kind of buckler covered with feathers, and when these two bucklers met upon his back, you would have sworn that they were the wings of a cock. His cuirass, also covered with similar plumes, represented the bird's stomach; a thick tuft of long feathers bending backwards seemed to rise from his chine; each leg was armed with a gilt spur, fastened just above his ankle; and in order that nothing might be wanting to the resemblance which he wished to produce, he clapped his wing-looking bucklers three times, and imitated the crow of a cock so perfectly, that any hen in the universe would have been completely taken in.

As I could not imagine the meaning of all this, I stopped the questions which they were going to ask, by entreating them to tell me in what part of the world we were; why so many persons thought proper to wear such different disguises; and what whim had induced these three in particular to assume their several characters.

"It is not very probable," answered the tall Facardin, "that you should be really ignorant in this respect, since, to judge by your own dress, the same design must certainly have conducted you hither. Still, as we are the last arrived except yourself, it is our duty to inquire whether you are willing to engage in this adventure, supposing that you either are or are not ignorant of its nature. If you consent, you shall be admitted into our company; otherwise you shall be furnished with everything necessary to enable your prosecuting your journey elsewhere."

I replied that I desired no better than to signalise myself in any adventure whatever; and I gave them my promise to make one among them.

"In that case," said the knight, who was decorated with the shoeing-horn, "it belongs to me, as being the last comer,

to receive you, conduct you, and instruct you as to what is going on in this quarter. I shall begin by making known to you the first of those adventures which guided myself hither; but with your permission I will defer my narrative till you shall have rested and refreshed yourself a little in one of the pavilions which you may perceive beneath yonder trees. Few people are ignorant of the enchantment of the Crystal Rock: you have finished the adventure of the brazen hoop, by delivering the gentlewoman who stands near you. Come then, and refresh yourselves after your fatigues; and while the lady spins beside you, I will tell her an anecdote or two respecting the Genius her husband, which will astonish her not a little."

Having made this compliment, the three knights called for their horses, and ordered one magnificently caparisoned to be brought for me: the cock was on horseback the first; and as soon as he was mounted he began to clap his wings, and to crow with all his might and main. When I saw such a figure on horseback, I thought that I should have expired with laughing; for his steed, frightened out of his wits by these unexpected proceedings, kicked, and jumped, and frisked, and made such a clattering, that the nymph Crystallina (who, according to the custom of the place, had been placed on a pillion behind me) laughed herself into so violent a fit of the vapours, that we had the greatest difficulty in bringing her to herself.

"Fair lady," said the cock, as soon as she was recovered, "I am extremely flattered by your approbation; but still when we come to the point, I am terribly afraid of failing. As for you, valiant stranger," he continued, addressing himself to me, "I would advise you, as a friend, to take the wheel from this lady, and spin away as usual."

"As usual?" I exclaimed. "May I be called a traitor

and a scoundrel, if ever I spun a thread in the whole course of my life!"

"Nay, it does not signify!" replied he, who was to be my master of the ceremonies, and who wore the leather apron; "only it is as well to practise beforehand."

This said, he gave orders that the rest of my equipage should be brought after me (meaning the other spinning-wheel), and that the golden bark should be conducted to the mouth of the river, on whose banks the pavilions were pitched.

As soon as we were in motion, the strangers and myself began to examine each other again from head to foot. I had already opened my mouth to inquire why they chose to wear their masquerade dresses so long after the carnival, but the Knight of the Awl guessed what I was going to ask.

I perceive, said he, that you are come hither from no premeditated design, though in this extraordinary apparel. That is not the case with us: and since you appear to feel such astonishment at the sight of our arms and dresses, you probably are ignorant of the nature of the adventure which you have just engaged yourself to attempt. I will therefore instruct you in every particular, and lay before you all the dangers which it presents, and the recompense which it promises.

HISTORY OF MOUSSELLINA THE SERIOUS, PRINCESS OF ASTRACAN

The King of Astracan (it was thus that the Knight of the Awl commenced his narrative), one of the most powerful sovereigns of Asia, not only on account of his extensive dominions and the gold and silver mines contained in them, but of the valuable chintz manufactures which have rendered his name celebrated throughout the universe.—The King of

Astracan, I say, in spite of all his splendour and prosperity, still considered himself the most unfortunate of mankind, for he had no children to whom he might bequeath his sceptre. The Queen, his wife, was young, handsome, and well made; indeed, her whole appearance was so promising, and her flow of health so uninterrupted, that you would have taken your oath that the King's affliction was occasioned by no fault of hers. Accordingly, he never expressed the least displeasure against her personally on this account; and as he loved her passionately, he was not even offended at her laughing all day long at his extreme impatience, and the infinite pains which he took to procure a successor. So many vows were made, and so many sacrifices were offered, to obtain a blessing thus ardently desired, that the priests were perfectly worn out with fatigue; and as the King believed the whole fault in this business to be his own, there was no end to his baths, and his medicines, and his drinking mineral waters; for, in short, he fairly went through all the ceremonies which are prescribed to women, in order to produce fertility. At all this the Queen laughed ready to kill herself, as well as at the vows, the offerings, and the sacrifices which were lavished with so little effect; yet no one took it amiss that she should be the only person who appeared to be amused by what was considered by the nation as a public calamity. The people knew well that the poor Princess did not act thus singularly out of ill-nature, and that her only defect was that of being the most incessant giggler of the present age; everything made her laugh, and nothing entertained her. The King, her husband, had been engaged in several wars with the neighbouring sovereigns on this very account; for whenever they sent to announce some melancholy event (as, for example, the death of an only son), she answered the ambassadors with their long black trains, by such bursts of laughter, that

they immediately left the hall of audience in high displeasure, and sent off dispatches to their master, filled with indignant complaints at the gross violation which the respect due to representatives of sovereign majesty had experienced in their persons.

This malady of the Queen's daily strengthening and advancing towards perfection, by the advice of his council the King resolved that she should make a pilgrimage to the famous Oracle of the Cock, and that she should only be accompanied by a small number of attendants, as is usual on these occasions. The temple of this Oracle is at the gates of Fourchimena, capital of the kingdom of Bactria. She arrived there without accident, concealing her name and rank, in order to avoid the ceremony and expense of a public reception.

The King, who had followed her incognito, thought fit to explain the object of his voyage to the priestess of the temple himself; and while he was earnestly consulting the holy matron respecting his wife's embarrassment, her Majesty was ready to split her sides with laughing. The Priestess was extremely scandalised at this indecorous behaviour; however, after a few skips in the air, and some frightful contortions, she delivered the following oracle, as inspired by the sacred cock, her master:

"That which is wished by the *He*-Pilgrim,
Shall happen ere long to the *She*-Pilgrim!
And both shall laugh,
When the cow has a calf:
But the season which suits the best with laughing,
He, who makes the infant laugh,
Shall laugh the loudest laugh by half in!"

The beginning of this answer was sufficiently explicit; but the second part was rather embarrassing, and afforded the spectators ample room for exercising their powers of argument

and conjecture. The event, however, proved that the Oracle was as good as its word, and indeed better; for at the end of nine months the Queen produced a son and daughter, of which it was difficult to decide which was the most beautiful; though it was certain that they were both more beautiful than any child ever was at its first appearance in the world. Unfortunately, the birth of the children cost the poor Queen her life, for in the very act of being brought to bed she died of laughter.

Nothing could have consoled the King for her loss, except the children whom she left behind her, and the pleasure which he found in being able to sit quietly in his palace, without being stunned every moment by immoderate bursts of laughter. But he was not long permitted to enjoy such a happy state of tranquillity. At the end of six months the chamber, which contained his dearest treasures, was discovered in the night to be on fire. On the first alarm he hastened to the place; but though every one followed his example, and though numbers threw themselves into the flames in hopes of saving the children, the conflagration was so rapid and so dreadful, that it was only possible to rescue the little girl. The greatest part of the officers of the royal household, who remained in the midst of the fire and smoke till the very last moment, returned at length half roasted, but without being able to save the unfortunate Prince.

This calamity threw the whole kingdom into the deepest affliction. As to the King, he absolutely refused to admit of any comfort; but Time, who is the universal consoler, insensibly diminished the father's grief, while he gradually increased the daughter's beauty. She was the living image of her mother, except that she was taller, better proportioned, had a fairer skin, a finer complexion, and eyes more brilliant a thousand times. In short, if we are to credit those who

have seen her, she is at this moment a thousand times more beautiful than all the other Princesses in the world put together; but alas! he continued, heaving a profound sigh, it is evident, that they, who speak thus rapturously of Moussellina, cannot have seen all the Princesses in the world!

After making this reflection, the Knight of the Awl remained for some moments absorbed in a deep reverie; from whence he no sooner recovered, than he resumed his discourse in the following manner:—

The King, more dazzled with her charms than even his court and his whole people, was never weary of admiring himself in his performance; and believing her to merit all the crowns in the universe, he was determined not to deprive her of his own by contracting a second marriage. But as it was his fate never to enjoy perfect happiness in his family affairs, this admirable Princess, whose every glance showered darts of flame around her, and whose whole person and slightest movement displayed graces the most lively and animated, had never yet been known to open her mouth either for the purposes of laughter or conversation; and it was only when she yawned (which she was much in the habit of doing) that she exhibited gums of a brighter vermilion and teeth of a purer ivory, than ever were till then beheld by the eyes of mortals. The good King (who, while his daughter was a child, was continually thanking his stars that she was free from her mother's defect), as soon as she was grown up, would have given half his kingdom to have seen her laugh through the whole four and twenty hours; so heartily was he wearied of a gravity, which appeared to him even more insupportable than her mother's incessant laughter.

No means were left untried, which might possibly induce

her to break this silence, which distressed everybody, and to overcome her solemnity, with which she was out of all patience herself: for it was quite evident from her manners, that every thing entertained her, though nothing could make her laugh: but all means were tried in vain. Philosophers, chemists, masters of languages, and instructors of parroquets, all exerted their talents to make her speak, and all threw away their time; nor was her gravity less obstinate than her silence. In vain did they collect together all the buffoons and jesters of the kingdom, good, bad, and indifferent: the King even sent for the best company of comedians to be found in all China, where farces are acted in greater perfection than in any other country of the universe; but they might as well have remained at home. They were not able to twist the Princess's mouth into so much as a single smile.

As it often happens that misfortunes which appear to be past remedy are frequently followed by others still more difficult to support, so it proved in the present instance: an event at length occurred, which made the King, the court, and indeed the whole kingdom look as grave as herself. She was fond of all kinds of amusement, but particularly of the chase: a magnificent castle, embosomed in a wide and agreeable forest, and situated at scarcely a day's journey from the metropolis, was the abode which she had selected for the purpose of enjoying this exercise in perfection. She managed her horse like an Amazon; and in her hunting equipage not only looked as lovely as Diana herself, but was without comparison more dexterous and active.

One day, when the ardour of sport had carried her farther than was her usual custom, and when the exertion of killing and pursuing the forest's inhabitants had nearly exhausted her strength, she found herself on the banks of the river,

which traverses the forest: it is the same by which your bark is to rejoin us at the shore, whither we are now proceeding. The waters of this river are full as clear as those in which Alexander the Great was so near losing his life, but are by no means reckoned so dangerous. As their qualities were well known, no objection was made to the wish which the Princess made to refresh herself by bathing. Accordingly, she hastened into the water, all covered with dust and perspiration, without giving her attendants time to raise the magnificent pavilion of chintz embroidered with gold and silver, which was usually erected on these occasions.

Her male attendants of course withdrew to a considerable distance, before the Princess began to undress. There only remained with her two of her principal ladies and four maids of honour, who, by the King's order, never left her, because they were the greatest talkers to be found in all Astracan. They followed their mistress into the river, and having placed themselves near her, the neighbouring woods and rocks soon rung with such a clack, as never was heard before, nor will be again. For my own part I am persuaded, that instead of being induced to talk by listening to these damsels (which was her father's design in placing them about her person), the poor Princess, overpowered by their flux of words, had made a vow never to open her lips, from the fear of resembling them.

Whether this was the case or not, it is certain that the King was soon under the necessity of forming a new household for his daughter: for while she was refreshing the loveliest limbs in the universe in the most transparent and delicious of all possible rivers, these chattering women began to praise her beauty, all at the same time. One exclaimed, that the god of the stream must needs be the foolishest fish that ever swam, to see so perfect a beauty in his bed without

giving any sign of his being in existence. Another declared, that poor Jupiter must certainly be grown lamentably old, since he did not think it worth his while to metamorphose himself for the sake of a mortal more charming than all the goddesses put together; he who had formerly transformed himself into bulls and swans in honour of creatures who would have looked like so many scullions by the side of a beauty who discovered through the thin gauze (which formed her only covering) ten thousand charms of the most dazzling lustre!

It is still a question in dispute, whether the god of the river was out of patience at their chattering, or the Deities of Olympus were offended at their impertinence; but whichever was the case, it so happened, that all on a sudden the waters raised themselves to an astonishing height. Terrified at the prospect of being drowned, the females hastened to regain the bank; when they beheld close behind them a monster, whose enormous bulk occupied the whole space between the opposite shores. In vain did they endeavour to climb the nearest bank, though the waters nearly placed them upon a level with the land: they were carried away by the impetuosity of the current, and soon swallowed up like so many frogs by the immense throat of the crocodile, who followed close behind them.

The Princess, who had seen but too distinctly the tragical adventure of her ladies and her maids of honour, had now less inclination to laugh than ever; especially as the monster, as soon as he had got his teeth picked by a particular fish, who follows him everywhere for that express purpose, made towards her at full speed. Her first intention was to gain the nearest bank by favour of the waves, which had already made their way over it; this point once carried, she might easily seize her bow and arrows, which lay at no great distance, and

defend herself against the crocodile's attacks. Unluckily, all her male attendants, who upon her preparing to bathe had withdrawn out of respect, were now assembled on the banks of the river, whither the cries of the unfortunate maids of honour had attracted them; and the Princess's modesty made her judge, that it would be by no means becoming to expose herself to their view, covered with nothing more than a few yards of wet muslin. In this extremity, she could think of nothing better than to endeavour to escape from the crocodile by swimming, and accordingly she lost no time in throwing off her shift, which would have embarrassed her actions. She now exerted herself to the utmost; but as the monster was but a few yards distant from her, her hopes of escaping were very faint, when her shift floating upon the water attracted his attention. Instantly he seized it; and as if he had been perfectly satisfied with this precious spoil, he ceased to pursue the fair Princess, and sank under the waters as expeditiously as he had made his appearance.

The river, which had overflowed the banks, while he occupied the bed of it, immediately reverted to its place; this made the spectators conclude, that the monster would not return, or at least not till another time: the Princess, who was now stark naked, suffered nothing more than her head to be seen above the water; for in consequence of what had just happened, her whole suite consisted entirely of men, whom the cries of the poor ladies on being swallowed up by the crocodile had drawn thither. She made signs to them, that they must prepare one of her magnificent tents at some little distance from the river; and her orders being obeyed, she again made signs, that they should withdraw, and leave her at liberty to quit the bath. She soon reached the pavilion; and having dressed herself (though without a shift), she took her bow and arrows, rejoined her attendants, and mounting

her horse, repaired to the magnificent palace, which she had quitted that morning. In the meanwhile couriers were dispatched to the court, who informed her father of this melancholy adventure.

The King hastened to rejoin her without losing a moment; he was followed by the whole court; and by day-break the next morning he found himself in the presence of a daughter, whom he loved as dearly as his own existence; and for whom the danger, from which she had just escaped, seemed to have redoubled his affection. He wept through joy while clasping her to his bosom; then he fainted away through terror, on hearing the description of the crocodile. That very day he insisted upon the Princess's accompanying him to the capital, lest the monster should take it into his head to pay them a second visit, and do as much damage on land, as he had already done in the water. The rejoicings, which took place in honour of the Princess's escape, were not universal. Those persons, who were connected either by the bonds of relationship or affection with the beauties whom the monster had swallowed, were perfectly inconsolable for their loss: the lovers in particular besieged the King with requests that they might be permitted to examine the borders and environs of the river, even to its very source, in hopes that an opportunity might be found of avenging the death of their divinities by that of the accursed crocodile. At length he gave his consent, having first resolved to send a body of his best engineers to close up the mouth of the river and prevent by strong embankments the monster's approaches; at the same time he commanded them to leave the access to the sea open, lest instead of driving him out of his dominions he should enclose the crocodile within them.

The adventurous lovers, who formed an escort for the engineers, marched in two bodies on the opposite sides of the

river, and cursed their stars at having already proceeded above half-way without finding any vestiges of that, of which they were in search. At length those who patrolled along the right bank, arrived at a morass, which obliged them to go considerably out of the direct line of march. At the very moment when they were preparing to change their direction, they saw their companions on the opposite shore precipitate themselves into the river. Casting their eyes on the waters, they plainly discovered a piece of muslin floating there; not doubting that this was the Princess's shift, and that in consequence their allies had discovered the monster's retreat, without loss of time they followed their example: when the perfidious crocodile, who lay concealed among the reeds, with which the marsh was bordered, rushed upon them, and treated every one of them, as he had already treated their relations and their mistresses.

The engineers and their workmen, whose business was not distinguishing themselves by actions of valour or temerity, returned home just as they came: if it had not been for them, no one would ever have known the fate of these unfortunate adventurers.

While the public was employed in lamenting their loss, as they had already lamented that of their deceased mistresses, intelligence arrived that this confounded crocodile no longer kept any bounds in the mischief which he committed: he had already laid waste both sides of the river, swallowing up without mercy the cattle and their herdsmen, who (not having yet heard of this strange incident) continued to water their flocks and herds there as usual. In a short time after, it was perceived that there was an alarming diminution in the city of all kinds of provisions, as well as of all those articles which are necessary to maintain the luxury and magnificence of a metropolis, and which were usually brought thither by the

river from all parts of the globe. On inquiry, it appeared, that the monster, lurking (as I said before) among the reeds and rushes, with a single spring from the marsh into the river, sent all the vessels full of merchandise to the bottom, where the poor wretches on board of them immediately became his prey. It is not ascertained whether he had been told that women are naturally more tender than men; but it is certain, that he had quite another kind of greediness for the fair sex than for ours.

The King of Astracan was so completely overcome by such a rapid succession of misfortunes that he scarcely knew where to turn himself: however, he did not as yet know the whole extent of his ill-luck.

The lovely Princess, when she quitted the capital, had no less than three hundred and seventy four dozen of shifts under the care of her deceased first lady of the wardrobe. At her return, not one of them was to be found, nor could she by any possible pains ever get any more made to suit her. After ransacking all the shops both in town and country, and trying every kind of muslin, cloth and linen, she was at length obliged to make up her mind to wearing no shift at all, though nothing in the world appeared to her more uncomfortable: however, there was no resource, for all the new shifts which she tried on seemed to be bewitched: those which she wore during the day, took away her appetite, and those which she wore during the night, would not suffer her to get a wink of sleep.

The King, more affected by this new distress of his daughter's than by all his other afflictions put together, thought that in this extremity nothing better could be done than to send the great officers of the crown with magnificent presents to the oracle of the Cock.

The priestess of the temple received the officers extremely

well, and their presents still better: but she informed them that some time had elapsed since the Cock set out to pay a visit to the great Caramoussal, and that it was only in the vicinity of Mount Atlas that they could be satisfied respecting those matters which they had come to investigate in the vicinity of Fourchimena.

Though the King their master was extremely vexed at this delay, he kept up his courage; and only allowing them the time absolutely necessary for making preparations for this second journey, he dispatched the same ambassadors with three hundred elephants laden with presents of the finest chintz and linens to be found in his dominions. To give the embassy a still greater interest in the eyes of the enchanter Caramoussal, he caused it to be accompanied by his own band of musicians; though (as those say, who have heard them) these same musicians are more likely to turn the heads of those who are not accustomed to them, than to afford them any entertainment.

I was on the point, said the Prince of Trebizonde, of telling him, that I could speak from my own knowledge on this subject; but my companion did not give me time, continuing his discourse as follows:—

The Satraps of Astracan, said the Knight of the Awl, set forward with their bales of chintz, their three hundred elephants, and the same number of monkeys. They skirted along the boundaries of the Taurican Chersonesus, traversed the two Armenias, and at length arrived at a forest, where they were very near being deprived of a great part of the presents committed to their care. I already informed you, that the three hundred elephants carried immense bales of the most beautiful chintz that the universe could furnish: on the top of each of these packets was placed a monkey; though what the King their master imagined the wise Caramoussal

could possibly do with three hundred monkeys is more than I can tell you. However, whatever were his motives, he had commanded his Satraps above all things to be careful not to lose a single monkey by the way.

The forest, which it was necessary to traverse in order to reach the place of their destination, was so full of deer, hares, and other beasts of chase, that they were obliged to have recourse to their music for the purpose of obtaining a passage. No sooner did the band strike up than the animals scampered away on all sides, and vanished in a moment, to all appearance more alarmed than if all the hounds and huntsmen in the universe had been hard at their heels. However, this first success was shortly after very near producing the greatest of all possible disasters, by procuring for them an entrance into the forest; for no sooner were they in the midst of it (the trees being all either apple, walnut, or almonds) than the monkeys, who from the backs of their elephants required only a single spring to reach the very topmost branches, as if by general consent, skipped away in a moment.

One of them alone remained behind, a baboon, the most noble in his manners, and the most elegant in his shape of all baboons, past, present, and to come! Unfortunately, he was so melancholy in his disposition, that during the journey the Satraps could not occasionally refrain from tears at contemplating the sadness, in which he appeared to be plunged. Far from skipping about, and imitating the tricks and gambols of his companions, he passed the greatest part of his time in reading: if he was interrupted by any accident, immediately he was observed to recline his head upon one of his paws, sink into a profound reverie, and then suddenly cross his arms upon his breast, raise his eyes to heaven, heave the deepest sighs, and shed such showers of tears, that the spectators found it impossible not to keep him company.

He had quietly resumed his book, as he reposed upon his elephant, while his companions scampered about the forest, making such a noise and uproar that all within hearing were ready to go distracted. The caravan was obliged to halt during three whole days, for the purpose of re-assembling them: nor could they be persuaded to quit the trees till they were perfectly glutted with all kinds of fruit. After all, the whole number did not return, for three died of an indigestion produced by eating too many almonds, and in a few days afterwards the gripes carried off three more, who had stuffed themselves with green apples. In this emergency, all that the ambassadors could do, was to flay them, and stuff their skins with straw, in order that the number might be complete, which the King had charged them to present to the celebrated Caramoussal.

As soon as they reached the foot of the mountain, a courier was dispatched to give notice of their arrival, and to inquire whether the Enchanter wished them and their whole equipage to set forward for his dwelling; or whether he preferred their making the caravan encamp in the neighbourhood, till he should issue his commands respecting the manner in which he chose to receive the presents, with which they were entrusted.

At the end of three days the courier returned, and informed them, that Caramoussal was not to be found at the place which he usually inhabited: he was in retirement at the very summit of Mount Atlas, a situation perfectly inaccessible to all of them, except the monkeys: he concluded by saying, that he thought it necessary to make thus much known to them as soon as possible, in order that they might determine on their proceedings.

Upon hearing this, the ambassadors resolved to leave the presents under the care of their attendants at the foot of the mountain, and to endeavour to reach, as well as they

could, the place whither the Enchanter was supposed to have withdrawn.

They travelled during a whole fortnight, always going higher and higher by the most difficult road that ever was known, without finding any thing but rocks and precipices. At length, after having bestowed many a hearty curse upon the crocodile, who was the occasion of giving them all this trouble, as well as upon his Majesty's preference which had caused him to select them for this honourable employment: at length, I say, they perceived the road to become less difficult and dangerous, though they still continued to ascend. Here and there they found little valleys watered by delightful streams, whose banks were embellished by a profusion of wild flowers. Arriving still higher, they observed birds of a kind perfectly unknown to them, and even small pavilions were scattered about in various places. At the distance of six hundred furlongs more, they found that there was no means of mounting higher; and here it was, when they could see nothing above them but the clouds, that they encountered the far-famed Caramoussal.

He came from a pavilion considerably larger than those which they had observed by the way: on one side it was shaded by an innumerable quantity of orange trees, and surrounded on the other by various machines sustaining quadrants, telescopes, and all kinds of instruments which are used in contemplating the movements of the stars. He was followed from the pavilion by a man, whose arm was supported by a scarf. As the ambassadors were evidently in doubt, which of the two was the person of whom they were in search, the Enchanter advanced towards them, and inquired very politely, what the great King of Astracan desired of Caramoussal? On hearing this, they prostrated themselves before him, as if he had been some divinity; for his

appearance inspired them with quite another kind of reverence from that which the report of him had prepared them to conceive. They expected to see the hideous form of a sorcerer, or at best some old man with a long beard, and bent double by extreme decrepitude. Consequently, they were greatly surprised to see a tall personage, who, though somewhat upon the decline of life, had still a most noble air and majestic figure, which was displayed to considerable advantage by the magnificence of his habit.

He immediately caused them to rise; after which they disclosed their business, explained the nature of those misfortunes respecting which they came to consult him, and finished by enumerating the presents which they were commissioned to lay at his feet.

After listening to them attentively, he conducted them, before he gave any answer, to a part of the mountain whence the ocean was visible, and whence indeed the whole earth would have been visible if human eyesight could have stretched itself so far. They were quite terrified at the prodigious height at which they perceived themselves; the islands which rose above the sea appeared like little black spots, and the largest vessels like so many floating atoms. It was now that the Enchanter addressed to them the following discourse:—

"I am far from being what I am believed to be by the greatest part of those who only know me by a reputation, which I certainly by no means deserve to have obtained. It is true that long reflections, continual speculation, and perhaps the proximity of the celestial bodies, have enabled me to acquire great insight into whatever is most infallible in astrology. I will even allow that there is less certainty in the answers returned by most oracles than in my conjectures and predictions. Respecting that of the Cock from whom

they have referred you to me, or rather whom you have been advised to seek in my abode, his divinity is henceforward out of the question; other cares and other occupations engage his attention.

"Observe," continued he, "the distance between the place which we now occupy, and the billows which break against the mountain's base. If the King, your master, could collect three certain spinning-wheels which are dispersed about the world, he might then possibly obtain a cord long enough to reach the surface of the ocean from the summit of Mount Atlas, on which we now stand. This accomplished, he would enjoy the completion of all his wishes. The monster would disappear for ever; the Princess would laugh and talk; and these spinning-wheels would spin for her a shift even finer than that which she has lost, and which she might wear without danger to either her appetite by day, or her repose by night. But as it is impossible that the King of Astracan should ever possess these enchanted spinning-wheels all at the same time, listen to the advice which I shall now give him, in order that he may preserve his territories from total desolation, and may give the most lovely Princess in the world the only thing which she wants to render her the happiest and most accomplished. Let him publish everywhere, that whoever can vanquish the crocodile, or make his daughter laugh, shall be rewarded either with the hand of the adorable Moussellina, together with the kingdom of Astracan, or with the whole strength and power of the King, her father, to enable him to complete any other conquest which he may have in contemplation. Should the adventurers fail in making the Princess laugh, they may still be permitted to encounter the monster; for whether they begin by the monster or by the Princess is a matter of absolute indifference. All persons, of whatever rank or appearance,

must be allowed access to the lady; and once in two years she must not fail to make a journey of a couple of months for the purpose of exhibiting her divine beauties in the different provinces contiguous to the dominions of the King, her father. Now, then, farewell, illustrious Satraps," continued he, "restore to the sovereign who sent you the magnificent present with which he has thought proper to honour me. Caramoussal desires no other reward for the services which he performs than the pleasure of having rendered them."

"But suppose," inquired his companion, who carried his arm in a scarf — "suppose the bow and arrows should be among their presents, or in the possession of their attendants?"

The ambassadors, who had paid no attention to him till he made this speech, now cast their eyes upon him, and were struck all on a heap at beholding a mouth so prodigiously large, that, in point of enormity, that of the royal Fortimbrass could not possibly exceed it. Caramoussal, without attending to their astonishment, prevented the protestations which they were going to make, "that they did not possess a single bow and arrow in the whole equipage," by addressing himself as follows to the stranger with the wide mouth and his arm in a scarf:—

"It is not so near this place," said he, "that you can hope to find the arms which you mention."

He then took leave of the ambassadors, who rejoined the caravan in much less time and with much less trouble than it had cost them to obtain a sight of the great Caramoussal. As they had been absent for a considerable time, they ran over the list of their elephants, their monkeys, and their bales of chintz. The numbers were found to be complete, with the exception of the melancholy monkey, who, within

the last week had disappeared, though in what manner those who had been left to take care of the baggage were unable to say; neither was it possible to obtain any tidings of him, in spite of all the researches which they made in the neighbourhood. The Satraps were much grieved at his loss, and still more at not having been at least able to find his carcase, in order that they might have stuffed it, as they had done those of his six companions. However, there was no remedy, and they set forward upon their journey homeward.

On the sixth day, after going considerably out of their way, in order to avoid the wood so fatal to their monkeys, an adventure took place, which at first embarrassed them extremely, though it terminated very much to their satisfaction. They perceived at a distance several camels escorted by a body of men well armed. As the chiefs of the party seemed to be persons of consequence, and as they concluded that camels so carefully guarded must needs be loaded with something singular or precious, as soon as they were near enough to be heard they ordered the music to strike up in honour of the strangers. No sooner did this infernal concert begin, than its effect was visible on every man and beast among those for whom this compliment was intended. Above all, the camels flounced, kicked, and capered as if they were crazy, and threw the whole caravan into confusion. In their extreme agitation they threw off their loads, and these in falling burst open the cases of certain lions and tigers, whose appearance was by no means agreeable to the serenaders, for they came right towards them, and some of the musicians paid with their lives for wanting agility in making their escape.

The elephants, however, behaved extremely well on this occasion, and the monkeys extremely ill; for while the first

kept off the wild beasts with their trunks, the second rent the air with screams of terror, and dirtied all the bales of chintz on which they were sitting. It was at this moment that the pride of all the monkeys in the world appeared from behind the corner of a rock, which had hitherto concealed him, and astonished all the Satraps by his unhoped - for arrival. He was armed with a bow and arrows. He selected one for each wild beast, and with an unerring aim pierced their hearts, one after another. As soon as he saw them all stretched upon the earth he quietly drew out his arrows, saluted the Satraps, and then vanished among the rocks which bordered the plain, as suddenly as he had made his appearance.

In what manner the ambassadors, and the escort of the lions and tigers separated, I am not informed. But it is certain, that the former, on their arrival at the court of Astracan, having delivered to their master the answer and advice of the great Caramoussal, the King, under the sanction of his counsel and with the consent of his daughter, caused to be published everywhere the conditions on which all adventurers were permitted to enter the lists and aspire to the possession of the most beautiful Princess under heaven, and one of the most powerful kingdoms upon earth.

Since this publication, Fame has carried the report of the Princess's beauty farther than even the danger and singularity of the two adventures, by which her favour is to be obtained. She has not failed to visit all the neighbouring provinces by turns during a journey, which she makes yearly for two or three months. All who have seen her, either during her travels, or at her father's court, have found her beauty greatly to exceed its reputation; and the greatest part of them, seduced by the splendour of her charms and by expectations so brilliant, have endeavoured but in vain to

fulfil the required conditions. "Such, noble stranger," added the Knight of the Awl; "such is the occasion of our being assembled here, and such is the adventure, which your word binds you to attempt.

At the conclusion of this narrative we found ourselves on the banks of the river, where my eyes were astonished by the most singular and magnificent sight that I ever beheld.

But the remainder of the Prince of Trebizonde's adventures may as well be deferred, till you read the second part of these memoirs.

End of Part I. of The Four Facardins, written by Count Hamilton.

THE FOUR FACARDINS

AN ARABIAN TALE

PART II

(WRITTEN BY MAT LEWIS)

"And by and by the second course
Comes lagging like a distanced horse."
SOAME JENYNS.

"I INFORMED your Majesty," continued Facardin of the Crystal Rock (for such was the title assumed by him upon delivering Crystallina the Curious), "I informed your Majesty, that on the banks of the river I was destined to behold a sight, the most singular and magnificent: but upon recollection it strikes me that it may possibly make my narrative more intelligible if, before I describe the nature of that sight, I relate the events which occurred previously."

"I am quite of your opinion," replied the Sultan, "and give you great credit for the idea, which is equally novel and just. Proceed therefore in your own way; hitherto your adventures have amused me much, and I shall be delighted to hear the conclusion of them."

"And so shall I with all my soul!" exclaimed Dinarzade; "but I fear there are as yet but little hopes of such a blessing. However, go on, Prince Facardin, since his Sublime Highness will have it so; but for the love of the prophet, make as much haste as you can."

The Sultan here gave the divine Scherazade a slight kick to wake her; for during the history of the Princess of Astracan she had fallen fast asleep, and was snoring as loud as if her life had depended upon it. Though not over-

pleased at the interruption of her slumbers, she was prudent enough to restrain her anger; well knowing from the temper of her illustrious husband, that if she did not keep her tongue between her teeth, she possibly might not long keep her head between her shoulders. The Sultan was going to recapitulate the latter adventures for her information; but Scherazade requested him not to give himself that trouble, assuring him that she was as perfectly free from the curiosity, as from the other defects of Crystallina. Schahriar (I know not why, for he never thought proper to tell me) seldom heard this lady's name mentioned without giving some token of displeasure; he immediately turned his back towards his beautiful Sultana, and ordered Facardin to proceed with his history, which he did in the following terms:—

CONTINUATION OF THE HISTORY OF THE PRINCE OF TREBIZONDE

I was very much prepossessed in favour of my new companion by his noble countenance and graceful deportment: that prepossession was confirmed by the amusement afforded me by his conversation, and by a peculiar manner of expressing himself, which gave value to the most insignificant trifles. I listened to him with inexpressible pleasure, and thought that the charms of his natural eloquence were not a little set off by a set of the whitest teeth that I ever beheld. Being naturally open and conversable, I soon gave him to understand that I felt interested in his fate; and finding that our sentiments of esteem were mutual, we vowed upon the spot eternal friendship, and promised to communicate our adventures to one another with the very first opportunity. I shall not fail to recount them to your exalted Majesty in their proper place.

(The impatient Dinarzade gave a deep groan on hearing this promise; but the speaker paid her no sort of attention.)

Such discourse (continued he) conducted us to the banks of the river, where an infinite number of pavilions formed of the richest and most beautiful chintz informed us that the Princess Moussellina was already arrived. In spite of the numerous company in which I found myself (of which certainly not a member seemed to have met with a more fashionable tailor than myself), I could not help feeling rather embarrassed at the idea of appearing thus singularly accoutred before so illustrious an assembly. The attendants of the Princess, as I had already been informed, consisted of the principal Satraps and most distinguished characters of the court of Astracan; and as I have remarked that people of the highest rank are generally people of the worst manners, I made no doubt that I should be ridiculed most intolerably. In this I was mistaken: the deliverance of their mistress from her tedious gravity was a point of too much consequence to permit her attendants to be merry on the subject. On the contrary, they loaded us with compliments upon the extreme absurdity of our appearance; and I could perceive, that my companions were as much delighted to be thought ridiculous upon *this* occasion, as they would have been offended upon any other; such is the influence of circumstances.

I must not, however, omit to mention, that the Knight with the Awl did not participate in this delight. Absorbed in profound melancholy, it seemed scarcely a less difficult task to make *him* smile, than the Princess. Yet his conversation was so lively and entertaining, that being naturally addicted to gaiety, I was frequently ready to die with laughter. Not so my companion; while he amused all around him, his own countenance remained perfectly

unaltered; he uttered a *bon mot*, as if he was announcing some misfortune, and whenever he favoured us with an epigram *impromptu*, I always expected to hear a funeral oration.

I could not help remarking to him the inconsistency of his conduct:—"Your business here," said I, "is to make the Princess laugh: instead of which, if she has but one grain of sensibility in her whole composition, the moment that she beholds you she will burst into a flood of tears. I doubt not that the gloomy melancholy in which you are absorbed is occasioned by your love for Moussellina, and by your fear of being compelled to resign her perfections to some rival: but however such proofs of your inward attachment may flatter the vanity of that lady's bosom, they are by no means likely to operate upon the muscles of her face."

"You are not the first by many," replied my new friend, "who has made the same remark; and I own, I have but little hope of succeeding in the first-mentioned adventure. As far as regards myself, I doubt not that the Princess will look all her life as if she were an undertaker's apprentice: however, if I cannot make the lady laugh, I hope at least to make the crocodile cry, and that will answer my purpose just as well."

"But," said I, interrupting him, "are you not desirous yourself, that Moussellina should get rid of a little of her everlasting gravity? Why, your marriage ceremony will resemble the nuptials of a couple of screech-owls! Your contract will be dripping wet with the Notary's tears, and the Mufti will not be able to read the service for sobbing!"

"You have guessed right," rejoined the stranger, "in supposing the cause of my melancholy to be love, but you have mistaken its object. My intention is not to obtain the hand of the Princess in marriage, but to purchase for myself a claim to the king of Astracan's assistance, and for

my brother the possession of a woman, whom he loves most ardently. Yet even should my hopes be crowned with success, how shall I then proceed to obtain the object of my dearest wishes? Where shall I seek, what I never yet have found? How shall I find her, whom I never yet have lost? And how, oh! how, shall I join my existence to that of a fair one, who perhaps never had any existence at all?"

These questions were much too difficult for me to answer; and the stranger having sunk into a profound reverie, I forbore to interrupt him. We therefore proceeded in silence towards the tent, which was prepared for the reception of all those adventurers, who aspired to the conquest of Moussellina's gravity. The time appointed for this trial (as I was informed by one of the satraps our conductors, with whom, in order not to remain quite idle, I entered into conversation on dismounting from my horse), was still at the distance of four days, when also the two months appropriated for Moussellina's absence from Astracan would be completed; after which (should no one have succeeded in the adventure) she would return to her father's as solemn as ever, and leave the crocodile to pursue his riots undisturbed.

The tent to which we were conducted, occupied at least half a square mile; it was separated into a multitude of apartments by panels of painted chintz inclosed within frames of massive gold. I remarked that all the figures which adorned these singular walls were pourtrayed in the most ludicrous attitudes, and represented in the act of laughing heartily, doubtless from the hope of inspiring the Princess with an inclination to imitate them. In my own mind (but I took care to keep my opinion to myself), I was decided that his Astracanical majesty had judged ill on this point; for the faces made by these merry figures were so distorted, that it was very unlikely that his

daughter would wish to resemble them: not to mention, that as some of them were represented in the act of standing on their heads, it might possibly not have been thought quite consistent with her Royal Highness's dignity to appear in a similar situation.

Each of the pretenders to Moussellina's hand (for the satraps insisted upon reckoning me among these merry rivals) was conducted to a separate apartment: to my infinite satisfaction I found that the lodging of my new friend was appointed next to my own. My conductor, having ushered me into my chamber, opened a wardrobe well stored with robes, turbands, and other articles of dress. He then informed me, that as the grand trial would not take place for some days, I had better not throw away the advantage of novelty; but laying aside for the present the laudable absurdity of my appearance, he advised me to make a choice among the various garments with which he then presented me. I lost no time in following his advice: and while I exchanged my bed-gown for a magnificent robe of silver tissue, I informed the satrap that I by no means aspired to the hand of his mistress; that I would make faces before her with all my heart and soul, and might and main, if my doing so could be of the least use to her, or her illustrious father: and that it was so long since I had met with anything of the kind, that I should think killing the crocodile an extremely good morning's entertainment: but as for the Princess herself, I begged leave to declare with all possible respect, that it was exactly the same thing to me, whom she married, or whom she refused.

. . . . . .

"Upon my word, Prince," interrupted Dinarzade, in a voice equally expressive of anger and contempt, "you are strangely indifferent about women!"

"By no means strangely," answered the Prince with a smile; "nothing can be more natural. Nay, I will even own to you that there is but one woman in the world of whom I have a very high opinion, and she is . . ."

"For the love of heaven, who is she?" cried Dinarzade eagerly.

"A perfect stranger to you," rejoined the Prince, "and I mean that she should remain so: but more of this hereafter: at present I resume my narrative."

. . . . . .

I was just finishing my dress (and doubtless my companions were employed in the same manner) when Crystallina bounced into my room without ceremony. She seemed greatly agitated, and very soon poured forth such a torrent of words, as made the astonished satrap's ears ring again. She insisted upon her right to be presented to the Princess, and ordered the satrap to conduct her to the royal tent without delay. The lord chamberlain being sent for to decide the difficult question, "whether as the wife of a Genius she was entitled to an *entré* at court," he immediately decided it against her; assuring her that no Genius, or any one belonging to a Genius, was permitted to remain in the kingdom of Astracan.

"For my own part," continued his lordship, "I was fortunately born with a natural antipathy to Geniuses of all kinds. I thank my stars I never saw more than one in my life; and though he was an extremely dull one, he still contrived to make such a disturbance in the court of Ispahan, that the king swore by the poppy-coloured whiskers of Mahomet's fifth wife (his most solemn and irrevocable oath), that in future no Genius should dare to smell roast meat in his dominions. You see, therefore, my dearest madam," added his Excellency, shrugging his shoulders in the most fashionable manner, and bowing to the very

ground; "you see that it is quite impossible for me to oblige you. I am absolutely in despair at my refusal; but I trust the reasons which I have done myself the honour of laying before you will be found equally strong and satisfactory."

Crystallina, dying with curiosity to see this much celebrated Princess, answered the chamberlain with vehemence so audible, that it soon drew a crowd of listeners around her. But in vain did she talk herself hoarse in explaining that, though married to a Genius, she was anything but a Genius herself: the chamberlain was obstinate, and she could obtain nothing further from him than an admission "that though she might very possibly be no Genius, she certainly came under the description of a white witch." Having said this, he was on the point of retiring, when his eyes rested on the ebony spinning-wheel, which Crystallina still carried, and which, in the most eloquent parts of her oration, she occasionally menaced to discharge at his Excellency's head. No sooner did he perceive this machine than he started back, and whispered his deputy, who whispered the mufti, who whispered the Princess's nurse, who whispered the body-physician, who whispered the lord chamberlain again, and then they all whispered together.

It was thus that I stood with my incensed companion surrounded by a circle of whisperers, who seemed engaged upon something of the most serious nature. Crystallina was ready to burst with curiosity to know what they were saying, and begged for an explanation in the most urgent and pathetic terms. After a full quarter of an hour the conference ended; and the chamberlain advancing towards us, was on the point of addressing the lady, when he fixed his eyes upon me, who, for want of something better to do, was amusing myself with turning the handle of *my* spinning-wheel. No sooner did he perceive it than he started back

a second time, and whispered his deputy, who whispered the mufti, who whispered the Princess's nurse, who whispered the body-physician, who whispered the lord chamberlain, and then the whispering began all over again.

This second conference lasted much longer than the first; but I need not inform your most sagacious Majesty that one way or other everything must come to an end at last; so was it with this whispering. It ceased; and then advancing to Crystallina with an air equally polite but much more respectful than before, the chamberlain informed her that he was ready to conduct her to the royal tent. Dreading lest he should change his mind a second time, she took him at his word. In vain did I beg her to consider her singular appearance, and assure her, that since the days of Eve no woman had gone to court in her shift. The chamberlain was too impatient to conduct her to Moussellina to allow time for changing her dress; and as Crystallina was just as well pleased to be seen in her shift as in any other way, she soon quitted my apartment, and hastened towards that of the Princess. Thither I followed her, but not till I had been prevailed upon to carry my spinning-wheel along with me.

The night being already far advanced, we found Moussellina's tent illuminated by so great a quantity of torches of rose-coloured wax, that day itself would have been far less brilliant. I could not avoid remarking that each of these torches issued from the beak of an immense golden cock, richly ornamented with rubies and emeralds; and the Knight of the Awl whispered me that this bird was held in profound veneration throughout the dominions of Astracan.

The Princess was seated upon a throne of silver, overshadowed by a canopy hewn out of a single emerald. She was attended by twelve ancient females, and an equal number of the principal satraps, and was occupied in

receiving the pretenders to her hand. I will not attempt to describe the charms of this adorable personage; suffice it to say, that her eyes effaced the splendour of the torches which blazed around her; and that when she opened her mouth by accident, her breath was so sweet and balmy, that my head being naturally unable to support perfumes, it was with the greatest difficulty that I kept myself from fainting away.

The tent being already crowded by the multitude of her admirers, we, as the last comers, were obliged to wait till the others had been presented. She received them in a very gracious, though somewhat solemn manner, permitting each of them to kiss her alabaster hand; but she spoke to no one. As soon as the King, or Prince, or whatever he chose to call himself (for I suspect that many of these dignities were entirely of their own creation), was announced, she signed to her nurse, a venerable woman about sixty, who stood at the foot of the throne. Immediately, the old lady put her lips in motion, and as soon as she had pronounced a few civil sentences, her mistress nodded three times, as much as to say—"she has hit it":—the knight then retired to make room for his neighbour, who went through the same ceremony.

I asked a grave-looking old satrap (he had the most enviable pair of mustachios that ever I set my eyes upon!) whether by chance it had not been her Royal Highness's pleasure to be born dumb? He assured me very positively of the contrary.

"For," said he, "though she has never been heard to utter a syllable, she cannot possibly be dumb, as she perfectly understands everything that is said to her."

This argument was so irresistible, that I had not a word more to say upon the subject. I afterwards inquired who was this able logician? I was told that he was the president

of the Royal Astracanical Society; I could not but acknowledge that he was well entitled to fill such a place by his whiskers.

Near four hundred knights had already been presented; and now Crystallina impatiently requested the lord chamberlain to perform his promise. He hesitated not to obey her, and giving her his little finger with the most graceful air imaginable, he prepared to lead her towards the throne; when the sentinels, who guarded the entrance of the pavilion, rushed into it suddenly with looks equally expressing apprehension and surprise, and exclaimed, that the sky exhibited a sight the most extraordinary. It was indeed that very sight which I have already had the honour of announcing to your majesty.

This information was more than sufficient to rouse Crystallina's curiosity. Without considering the impropriety of her behaviour, she darted out of the tent, and in her hurry overset the unlucky lord chamberlain. Shocked at her rudeness in quitting this noble assembly so abruptly, I ran after her to bring her back, and (as he lay directly in my way) made bold to tread upon the lord chamberlain in passing. The knights, the satraps, the guards, the old women, and at last the Princess herself all followed my example, and never since the days of the deluge was a man of the lord chamberlain's rank so be-kicked and be-trampled.

The Princess was the last person to quit the tent. However, as soon as she reached the door, the crowd respectfully opened, and she passed through the midst of us with as much speed as her gravity would admit of her using; that is to say, upon a moderate jog-trot. Her attendants, one and all, assured me that she had never been seen to move along so nimbly before. For my own part, I could not help observing something constrained and ungraceful in her manner

of moving; but I suppose this was occasioned by her being without a shift, and certainly cloth of silver next to the skin must needs feel extremely uncomfortable.—But to proceed.

And now with one consent every eye was fixed upon the heavens. What was our astonishment at beholding an immense ball of fire, which every now and then burst into a multitude of little stars, and then as suddenly collected itself again into one blazing mass. We made various conjectures respecting this phenomenon. They were all extremely ingenious; unluckily, none of them was right. However, as the flaming ball seemed descending towards us, we at length agreed unanimously that the most likely means of ascertaining what it could possibly be would be to wait till we could distinguish what it really was. This was the suggestion of the whiskered philosopher. It met with universal approbation; and I could perceive that he was himself not a little proud of having struck out so luminous an idea.

Though extremely curious to know the cause of this singular appearance, my attention was not so much engrossed as to prevent my observing that one of Moussellina's women was considerably agitated at the approach of this flaming ball. She endeavoured, indeed, to conceal her emotion as well as she could, though it was considerably increased upon her finding that my eye was fixed upon her. The cause of her alarm had by this time arrived so near us that we could distinguish the particles of which it was composed. But if we felt surprise at its first appearance, how was that surprise augmented when we found the light to proceed from the mouths and eyes of an innumerable number of flying tigers, who appeared to act as guards and lanthorn-bearers to personages still more extraordinary than themselves.

Imagine, most illustrious Sultan, a cock considerably larger

than a full-grown turkey, his eyes sparkling with a brilliance far exceeding that of the finest carbuncles, his body adorned with a thousand beautiful colours, and his neck encircled with a chain of enormous emeralds. Seated upon this uncommon courser, and guiding him by the chain which served as a bridle, we beheld a gigantic monkey, who held a bow of polished steel in one hand, while with the other he governed his chanticleer with more grace than could have been expected from the very best bred baboon in the universe. On his back hung a golden quiver adorned with precious stones; and upon a crimson velvet pillion behind him sat a little old woman so hideous that we all exclaimed with one voice that the monkey was by much the handsomer animal of the two. It was with the utmost difficulty that she kept her seat, so long was her body and so short were her legs. Her nose was so little and snubby that it was not to be seen without a magnifying glass; but to make up for this deficiency, her chin was so immoderately long that it curled over her mouth, and rested its point between her eyebrows. She squinted so horribly, that the earth had full possession of one of her eyes, while the other was the property of the heavens. Her ears were of such a length, that to keep them from flapping about, she had been obliged to tuck them into her girdle. However, she had taken care to deck them out with a very smart pair of ear-rings; and her hair, which was of a flaming red, was frizzled up as high as a tower, and plastered all over with flour and hog's lard. To set off this charming face and figure to the best advantage, she had a little scarlet turban ornamented with a profusion of feathers of all possible colours, and stuck upon one side of her head coquettishly; while her person was enveloped in a travelling dress of deep yellow velvet, trimmed with a broad gold lace, and flounced and furbelowed with cat's skin. When I add, that her breath

was so strong that we needed all the perfume of Moussellina's to overpower it, your Highness may form some idea of the charms which ornamented this masterpiece of nature and art.

These extraordinary personages continued to descend, and as they approached inspired us with very justifiable apprehensions, a flight of fiery tigers being by no means the most agreeable visitors. The event proved that our alarms were without cause. When they arrived within a few yards of us, the escort remained motionless in the air, while the cock lighted on the ground not far from Moussellina. The monkey sprang nimbly out of the saddle, and taking the old woman in his arms, placed her upon her feet with the greatest care and delicacy. She seemed greatly fatigued with her journey; but as soon as she recovered her breath, she advanced towards the heiress of Astracan, and addressed her as follows:—

"Illustrious Princess, you behold an ambassadress from the great Caramoussal. He requests you, through me, not only to receive with kindness, but to treat with profound respect, this paragon of all earthly monkeys. Here only can he expect the cure of that melancholy under which he now labours, and here has Caramoussal engaged that he shall obtain it. Farewell, lovely lady! May the chin increase, may the foot be diminished; may the spinning-wheels turn, may the rope be woven; and, oh! may your beauty never subject you to the same misfortune which my unlucky charms have entailed upon your most obedient and very humble servant."

As she said these last words, she burst into tears, and while she sobbed most piteously, she made such abominable wry faces, that all the beholders were ready to expire with laughing. It was then that the Princess rejoiced in her immovable gravity. She alone kept her countenance, and endeavoured to apologise by signs for the ill-breeding of her

company. The nurse explained this to the old woman in very polite terms; adding, that Moussellina requested her to repose herself in the royal tent after her journey, when she hoped that she would relate her adventures, as she was extremely anxious to know the birth, parentage, and education of so extraordinary a person as she appeared to be, and also to hear some account of the great Caramoussal who made presents of monkeys to Princesses. The stranger accepted the proposal, and the whole company returned to the tent; but the old woman would not begin her narrative till she had thrown herself upon her knees before the monkey, and demanded his permission. The animal (who really seemed to be the best tempered and best bred of the monkey kind) gave his assent in a very gracious manner; then throwing himself upon the embroidered carpet, he seemed to be absorbed in profound melancholy.

In the meanwhile, the old woman, having passed a few minutes in silent reflection, a precaution highly necessary in relating so long a history, began her narrative in the following words:—

HISTORY OF THE MATRON OF MOUNT ATLAS

"Your Royal Highness," said she, addressing herself to Moussellina, "is probably not aware that our families are nearly connected. The queen, who had the honour to die in giving you birth, was no other than——"

* * * * * * *

The old woman had proceeded no further in her tale when her eyes rested upon me. She stopped, and suddenly starting from her seat, she hobbled towards me.

"Sir Knight," said she, "what is your name?"

"It is Facardin," I replied.

This singular name appeared to excite surprise in everybody, except in the inquirer, and in the tall knight with the fish kettle upon his head; to whom the old lady now made the same demand respecting *his* name.

"My name?" answered he with an air of perfect indifference, yawning at the same time; "it is Facardin."—The general wonder redoubled.

"And yours?" resumed the old woman (after a moment's pause), addressing herself to the Knight of the Awl.

"It is," replied he with a low bow, "it is Facardin."

"Facardin!" screamed out the old woman (in a voice so shrill, that it almost cracked the drum of my ears; at the same time giving three skips in the air with such activity as was truly surprising in a person of her age and figure), "Facardin? Facardin?—One Facardin—two Facardins—three Facardins—One Facardin more, and one Facardin less; then all for a time will be wrong, and all will at last be quite right."

Having said this, she darted out of the pavilion, sprang nimbly upon the cock, and giving him a slight kick, he rose into the air, and instantly disappeared, old woman, flying tigers, and all. It may not, however, be improper to remark, that the foot with which she kicked her chanticleer, was the smallest and most elegantly formed that I ever remembered to have beheld.

Great was the general disappointment at the matron's abrupt departure. We trusted, however, that the monkey would supply her place, and continue the relation of those adventures in which his companion had made so little progress: but here our hopes were again frustrated. In vain did we promise him pig-nuts and bilberries; in vain did we threaten him with whips and chains. To our utter surprise, the monkey seemed not to understand us. We

thought that he might probably be a foreigner, and tried by turns every language in use throughout the habitable globe; but with no better success. Say what we would, not one syllable would the monkey answer! at length we were obliged to agree with the opinion of the whiskered philosopher; who in a speech of three hours, replete with the most sublime eloquence, most learned disquisitions, and arguments the most logical and irresistible, proved to us very clearly,—"that whatever sceptics might advance to the contrary, the monkey was actually . . . a monkey."

The Princess, however, was still persuading the animal not to be as provokingly silent as herself, when Crystallina (impatient to have her presentation over) was led forward by the deputy chamberlain; for as to the chamberlain himself, he was too much bruised to appear again that night. Instead of attending to Crystallina's compliment, I was not a little surprised to see the Princess suddenly seize her by the corner of the shift, and examine the mark of it with great eagerness and attention. She then shook her head, and with a deep sigh let the linen drop again. After this strange behaviour, she seemed to recollect its impropriety, for she blushed deeply, and was signing to her nurse to make an apology, when she discovered the spinning-wheel, which Crystallina, during the ceremony of presentation, had deposited upon the carpet.

"That is mine!" cried the Princess, seizing it eagerly, "and have it I will, that's positive!"

The joy of the whole court at hearing her speak for the first time was only equalled by the rage of my fair companion: but without minding her reproaches, the Princess began to spin with all her might and main, when she stopped her work for an instant, in order to address herself to me.

"Spin!" said the Princess; for though she had thus unexpectedly gained the power of speech, she was not yet able to use it fluently. "Spin!"

In vain did I protest that I never had spun a thread in my life. Moussellina would be obeyed; and the whole court repeating in full chorus—"Spin!"—I even set myself to work with the best grace that I could. But scarcely had I turned the handle twice, when a third wheel was seen at the top of the tent, and a pair of beautiful white arms passing themselves through two holes in the chintz hangings began to turn the machine with incredible swiftness and dexterity.

While the general attention seemed engrossed by this phenomenon, mine was employed upon a different object. Enraged at her having been thus plundered by the Princess, Crystallina had retired in dudgeon to a distant corner of the pavilion, and was busily engaged in conversation with that identical ancient lady, who had expressed so much emotion at the sight of the flaming ball: but their discourse did not long continue undisturbed. The monkey had raised himself from the floor quietly: he advanced with caution towards the talkers, and having crept behind them unobserved, he suddenly sprang upon the old lady's back, and fastened his teeth in her left ear. The duenna screamed, cried, kicked, and struggled: but in spite of her efforts and those of the spectators, the animal maintained his hold, nor quitted it, till he had fairly dissevered the ear from its adjoining parts. No sooner was her head deprived of this natural ornament, than her form dissolved into a cloud of smoke, but soon collected itself again into the figure of an enormous giant, who rose with angry looks into the air; the roof of the tent opened, and the Colossus disappeared. At the same moment the beautiful hands vanished; Crystallina fled shrieking from the tent; and the monkey slipping off his skin with as

much ease as if it had been a great coat, there was seen in his place a man about five and forty, of a most noble presence, and whose features (except his mouth) were truly prepossessing.

But oh! that mouth! Mahomet, what a mouth! Your Majesty may possibly think, that a feature so out of all proportion was likely to excite merriment in the spectators; but no! terror was the effect produced upon all present by this miraculous mouth; and when he opened it to address the Princess, so terrible an abyss was presented, that the poor little soul involuntarily jumped back, and we had some difficulty in convincing her that she had not been swallowed up alive! In truth, had the stranger felt any wish for such a mouthful, I am certain that he could have bolted her Royal Highness without any difficulty; for I would have betted ten to one, that his mouth could take in a full grown ox, horns and all, without troubling itself to make more than a moderate stretch. But I must beg leave to observe that I do not mean an ox bred in Lincolnshire, which kingdom (as I have read) produces that animal uncommonly large, but merely such ordinary sized oxen as are usually found in your Majesty's dominions. I thought it right to mention this, as I by no means approve the fashion of those rodomontading travellers, who exaggerate matters in order to excite wonder, when in fact nothing can be more ordinary and natural.

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"You are quite right," observed the Sultan, "and I much admire so scrupulous an attention to veracity. But pray, go on with your history; for as you have told us what could go into the stranger's mouth, I am quite impatient to know, what could come out of it."

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You will naturally suppose, proceeded Facardin, that from

so capacious a mouth we expected a tremendous voice, and words every one of them composed of at least ten syllables. However, it soon appeared that the stranger's voice was like any other voice, and that he had not the slighest objection to—"ifs,—ands,—ofs—or alsos." As soon as Moussellina had recovered from her fright, he announced himself to her as Fortimbrass, King of Denmark, brother-in-law to the merry Queen of Astracan, and consequently uncle to the mournful Princess. She gave him a very affectionate welcome, and permitted him to salute her roseate cheek; but it was observed by all, that when his monstrous mouth approached her, the poor little Princess shook like an aspen leaf.

We were all impatient to hear the adventures of this monkey-monarch, which, we doubted not, would include those of the frightful old woman. Fortimbrass begged us to suspend our curiosity till the next day, as he was greatly fatigued, having galloped all the way from Mount Atlas (upwards of seven thousand leagues) in two hours and a quarter. We could not deny the plausibility of this excuse, and we soon after separated for the night; Fortimbrass rejoicing that he had got rid of his claws and tail; the courtiers, that the Princess had been induced to speak; and Moussellina, that she had not only recovered her own spinning-wheel, but through my means possessed another besides it! Of both of these wheels she requested me to take charge, adding, that the next day we would resume our work. The whole company then retired in perfect good-humour, except the nurse, who was somewhat chagrined at the reflection that in future she was only to talk for herself. It is true that because her mistress had recovered her voice, it did not follow that the nurse had lost hers: but the old lady knew well that being old and ugly she might talk to

all eternity without a soul listening to her, and that, she thought, was almost as bad as not talking at all.

Facardin of the Grotto (for such was the title of my new friend) followed me to my apartment. Here he introduced me to his brother, who was no other than the knight with the fish-kettle for a helmet. He was certainly much handsomer than his brother, and his person was truly noble and majestic: but the countenance of my acquaintance was so amiable, and bore so strong an expression of mingled sense and sweetness, that I hesitated not for a moment to give him the preference. As soon as the first compliments were over, I begged Facardin of the Grotto to gratify my curiosity by relating the cause of his bearing the same name with myself. With this request he complied in the following terms:—

HISTORY OF FACARDIN OF THE GROTTO

It is impossible for me to tell you where and in what manner I was born; since, though it was a ceremony in which I sustained a very principal part, the circumstances have as completely slipped my memory as if they had never happened! neither can I tell you, who were my parents, as, in spite of all my pains in looking for them, I have been able to meet with no relations, except my brother, whose ignorance on this subject equals my own. The earliest period which I can recollect found me the inhabitant of a subterraneous grotto, under the care of an old hermit, whom I called father, but who, I have more reasons than one for believing, had no right to that appellation.

This singular person was by birth a Chinese, and his name had formerly been the Mandarin Fi-Fum-Foam-Fim. He possessed extraordinary abilities, and not only gave me

daily proofs of his being a prodigy of wisdom, but was even at the trouble of assuring me of the fact himself. Unluckily, the extravagant kindness, which nature had shown in forming his intellectual parts, was fully counterbalanced by her stinting him in his externals. The poor Mandarin was born with but one eye, one ear, one nostril, one arm, and one leg: the latter was placed in the centre of his body, which turned round upon it as if upon a pivot; and to such perfection was he arrived in the management of it by dint of practice, that he could hop upon his one leg nearly as fast as any other person could run upon two.

It was long before his parents could pitch upon a proper wife for him; till at length a female appeared at the court of Pekin, who seemed formed by nature for the express purpose of supplying all the deficiencies of the young Fi-Fum-Foam-Fim. She called herself the lady Fim-Foam-Fum-Fi; and as he was entirely made up of unities, she on the other hand was composed of nothing but quinquities; for she had five arms, five legs, five ears, five eyes, and five nostrils to each of her five noses. As with such a person she was not pestered with too many admirers, she readily accepted the addresses of the young Mandarin: but alas! it soon appeared that her name was not more the reverse of his, than the temper of Fi-Fum-Foam-Fim was opposite to that of Fim-Foam-Fum-Fi! he was gentle, and she was passionate; he was wise, and she was silly: he employed his single hand in no offices but kind ones; while she was persuaded that nature had given her three additional legs and arms for no earthly purpose than the better to enable her to thump and kick her husband. At length, however, one fine sunshiny morning, the Mandarina took it into her head to die, and the Mandarin took it into his to bury her. It was shortly after this event that a revolution in China obliged

him to leave that country, and one of his friends having entrusted me to his care, he took refuge with me in the island of Serendip.

His acquaintance with the Mandarina Fim-Foam-Fum-Fi, of lamented memory, had made him an inveterate woman-hater, and he endeavoured to communicate his aversion to me. His labour was thrown away; I sighed ardently to behold one of these terrible wild beasts (for such he had taught me to fancy them), neither could all his arguments erase this wish from my mind, any more than a singular accident, which occurred to me when scarce sixteen.

I was sitting in the grotto one evening, and endeavouring to persuade my governor to let me have at least one peep at these monsters, when suddenly a large black cloud descended into the cave. In a few minutes it dispersed, and I beheld a stranger of noble and commanding presence, who held in one hand a golden wand, and permitted the other to serve as a perch for the largest and most beautiful cock that I ever beheld: it struck me this evening that it was the very same bird which brought hither the King of Denmark; but of that I cannot be positive. No sooner did the hermit perceive the cock, than he sank upon his one knee; the bird extended its right wing towards him, and he kissed it with every mark of affection and respect. The stranger then conversed with the Mandarin in some language unknown to me; but their eyes sufficiently testified that I was the subject of their discourse. It lasted about an hour, after which the stranger prepared to depart; but first, he addressed me in these remarkable words:—

"Youth, be in all things submissive to your venerable protector, but in nothing more than in abstaining from the sight of woman. Know, that as I lately consulted the stars respecting you, I read in them this threatening prediction:

'The first object which he loves, he shall love for ever! The first object which he loves, shall for ever prove cold and insensible; and even though that object should be in his possession, he never shall be united to the first object which he loves!' Remember this, be prudent, and be happy. Farewell!"

As he uttered these last words, a shower of tears fell from the eyes of the beautiful cock; at the same moment a cloud wrapped itself round them, and they quitted the grotto in the same manner as they had entered it. This incident for a time made an impression upon me; but reflecting that there was little danger of my feeling any sentiment like love for a wild beast, I resolved to gratify my curiosity, and see a woman, let the danger be what it might. Accordingly I escaped from the Mandarin Fi-Fum-Foam-Fim, and after a fruitless search of some days, I stumbled upon the fair Crystallina, whose curiosity was not a jot less urgent than my own. What passed till we parted, as well as the adventure which separated us, you probably have heard from that lady; it would therefore be unnecessary to relate it now.

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Here Schahriar interrupted the Prince of Trebizonde, and requested him to repeat those adventures, as he had so happy a knack at forgetting what was told him that they would seem to him exactly as if he had never heard them before; a talent upon which he seemed to value himself prodigiously. However, Dinarzade begging with tears in her eyes that the Prince might be suffered to get to the end of his long-winded history (if, indeed, such a thing was possible, which she began to doubt), the Sultan was prevailed upon to suffer him to proceed. He did so, as follows:—

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Facardin of the Grotto continued thus: I had for some

time flattered myself that the oracle respecting my future fate had been completely mistaken; it was, at least, certain that Crystallina had been anything but cold and insensible. But now that we were parted, I discovered that the sentiment with which that curious damsel had inspired me had nothing to do with *love*. So far was I from being grieved at her departure, that I rather rejoiced at no longer having a woman continually at my elbow, with whom I had found full leisure to be satiated. The gust of wind which divided us so obligingly, bore me swiftly through the air. It deposited me unhurt at the foot of a mountain, whose base was bathed by a rapid river. It was night; the moon was at its full, and its beams enabled me to discover a small island at no great distance.

I was in doubt what course to pursue. The island seemed uninhabited, and the mountain did not wear an aspect much more promising. While I hesitated, I observed something moving on the shore of the island. I strove to distinguish its figure, but in vain. After a few moments it plunged into the water, and seemed to be hastening towards the mountain. Not to be deficient in good-breeding, I advanced to receive the new-comer; but my politeness instantly vanished on perceiving that it was nothing else than an old lion, whose bulk and looks were truly tremendous. My doubts were now removed; I immediately took to my heels, and began to climb the mountain with all possible expedition.

As the lion did not pursue me, I soon slackened my pace. It now for the first time entered my head that this exploit of mine was by no means to my credit, and that to begin my career by running away was but a sorry presage for my future fame. I therefore determined to return and face the lion; and drawing a sabre with which I had provided myself on quitting the grotto, I measured back my steps. I confess, that as I drew nearer to the lion's

neighbourhood, I felt my eagerness to engage decrease very fast; and at length I could not resist peeping over a piece of rock, in order to observe his motions, before I attacked him. He was stretched at his full length just below me, reclining his head upon his left hand. He sighed frequently, and at intervals wiped his eyes with his tail, which served him for a pocket-handkerchief. He was in such evident distress, that I thought it quite cruel to disturb him, and resolved rather to deprive myself of the honour of cutting off his head, than intrude upon his sorrows by giving him an opportunity of biting off mine.

While we were in this position, my attention was attracted by a light, which glimmered upon the top of the mountain. At first, I thought that it was a paper kite with a lanthorn tied to its tail; but on its descent I discovered the light to proceed from a fiery car drawn by two flying tigers. In this sat a man, splendidly habited, and I recognised with surprise the stranger who had told my fortune in the Mandarin's grotto. He was accompanied by a lady, the elegance of whose form gave me great curiosity to see the face belonging to it; but this was impossible, in consequence of her head-dress, which was the most extraordinary ever worn by woman. It was no other than the enormous cock, which I had seen in the grotto, and which, placing a claw upon each of her shoulders, overshadowed her face with his wings, while his tail streaming down her back, formed a lappet very tasty and ornamental.

As soon as the car touched the earth, the Enchanter aided his companion to alight. Instead of expressing terror at the sight of the lion, she hastened towards him; while he, upon hearing her steps, reared himself upon his hind-legs, and (as I imagined) prepared to spring upon her. I already gave her up for lost; but to my great surprise I found, that if he

devoured her at all, it was likely to be with kisses. The nymph repaid his caresses with interest, though she was evidently so much affected that she was ready to faint. The lion, however, who seemed to have all his wits about him, made haste to feel in his left ear for a smelling-bottle, with whose contents he proceeded to bathe her nose and temples. When I saw him prepare for this charitable office, I felt no little concern for the poor lady, as I thought him by no means calculated for the employment, and doubted not that his claws would flay her nose completely. I was, therefore, much pleased to find that the considerate beast was aware of this danger, for he poured a little of the lavender water upon the tip of his bushy tail, and then chafed her nostrils with the greatest success and dexterity.

The nymph being recovered, the lion now paid his compliments to the Enchanter, and afterwards shook the cock by the right wing in the most hearty and affectionate manner. The whole party then sat down on the banks of the river, where the magician seemed to endeavour to console the other three; but to judge by the tears that were shed, his eloquence was not very persuasive. In about an hour the party broke up: the members of it took a most affecting leave of each other; after which, the lion, throwing himself into the water, returned to his island, while the Enchanter and the nymph (still wearing her singular head-dress) returned to their car: it rose into the air, and disappeared on reaching the summit of the mountain.

Supposing that this same mountain must serve as a retreat for the Enchanter, I resolved to ascend it, and endeavour to find him out. He had formerly appeared to take an interest in my fate, and I thought it possible that he might give me some intelligence respecting my parents; a subject on which the Mandarin had always preserved an inviolable silence, and

which I was extremely anxious to get cleared up. I fancied that I should feel awkward upon entering the world, if on being interrogated respecting my family, I should find myself obliged to answer—"Upon my honour, Sir, I know no more about it than yourself." Accordingly, I set off in pursuit of the Enchanter, and at length reached the mountain's summit; though not without being twenty times on the point of breaking my neck by the way.

I now found myself at the entrance of a spacious grotto, adorned with statues, shells, and a variety of other ornaments, rustic, it's true, but disposed with infinite taste. In the middle hung a bird-cage composed of jet and ivory, and in one corner stood the enormous cock, employed in turning with great gravity the handle of an ebony spinning-wheel. I thought this occupation extremely unprofitable, for the foolish bird (who probably had been ill-taught) had neglected to put any flax upon the distaff.

As the grotto had another outlet, I was proceeding to try my fortune further, when I heard the voices of persons approaching. I drew back, and soon after saw the Enchanter enter, leading the same lady who had expressed so singular an attachment to the lion. They were accompanied by a stranger, whose person I need not describe to you, as he was no other than the Giant, the loss of whose ear disenchanted Fortimbrass this evening, and who (by the bye) is also Crystallina's husband. In one hand he held an enormous club, and the other sustained a gilded tobacco-pipe, from which he occasionally puffed clouds of smoke in the face of the Enchanter. No one seemed to be aware of my presence. The Giant threw himself upon a couch of turf, and listened with an indifferent air to the supplications of his companions.

"Be not thus contemptuous," I heard the Enchanter say,

on entering; "you have the advantage at present, but fortune will one day change. The same arts, which have made you possessor of the two spinning-wheels, may again deprive you of them; nor can you put them to any use without the third, which I never will trust out of my own custody. Listen then to my proposals. Restore my brothers to their original forms; suffer me to re-assemble the limbs of the Queen of Denmark; and forbear to insist upon the dreadful conditions attached to the possession of Sapinella. On my part, I assure you, though I cannot consent to becoming your subject, that I will never attempt to become your master; the two spinning-wheels shall remain yours for ever, and I promise you from this moment eternal peace and amity."

"Promise me a fiddlestick!" interrupted the Giant, taking the pipe out of his mouth; "will yonder stubborn little Princess promise to marry me, if I put matters to rights again? That is the only promise which will have any effect, I can assure you."

"I marry you?" exclaimed the damsel: "Inhuman monster, what claim can you advance to my affections? Have you not cut my unfortunate mother into a thousand pieces? Have not your spells compelled my royal father to walk upon all fours? Besides, if you had not the worst memory of any Genius upon earth, you would recollect that the stars have decreed that I shall marry nobody, unless I marry Facardin, Prince of Ophir."

"A fig for the stars!" cried the Giant; "they don't know what they talk about; for it was but last night that I read in them these identical words, written in a very neat running hand — 'Sapinella of Jutland shall never marry Facardin, Prince of Ophir.'"

"I shall certainly go distracted!" exclaimed Sapinella, wringing her hands. "I am to marry nobody, if not the

Prince of Ophir, and yet it seems the Prince of Ophir is never to marry me: the meaning of all which is, that I am never to marry at all! Surely the devil is in the stars, and I wish they were all at the bottom of the sea, for they are the plague of my existence!"

Here she began to weep, as if she meant to set the room afloat. However, her tears could not melt the Giant's hard heart, who rose to take his departure.

"On no other conditions," said he, "will I reverse my spells; and if you can reverse them yourself, you are cleverer than I take you to be. Farewell, Princess; the Prince of Ophir will be here shortly. I cannot prevent your seeing him, but I will prevent your liking him while with you; as to *his* liking *you*, that your own rashness has already prevented. Ay! ay!" continued he, addressing himself to the cock, "turn away, old gentleman! If you had done that sooner, you would have done wisely. As it is, your labour is thrown away, and you are likely to crow for sixteen years longer."

The cock only replied by a look of indignation, and by turning his tail upon him with an air, for a cock, remarkably majestic. In the meanwhile the form of the Giant, dissolving into a cloud of smoke, soon made its exit from the grotto.

In this conversation nothing struck me more than the name of the Prince of Ophir; it was the same as my own, and I began to suspect that the family name of the royal family of Ophir must needs be Facardin. To ascertain this point I now advanced from my concealment, and having made one of my best dancing bows, I addressed the Enchanter nearly as follows:—

"Permit me, Doctor," said I (for, as he was a conjuror, I thought that he must certainly have taken an University degree), "permit me, Doctor, to make myself known to you,

and ask you a few questions. Idle as you may think my curiosity, I confess I cannot help wishing to know the name of my parents, and to what place I went to be born. Satisfy me on this head, and you shall be handsomely rewarded for your trouble."

With these words I showed him the palm of my hand, and prepared to cross his with a piece of money. The Enchanter, who was by no means a common fortune-teller, rejected both; but, before he could reply, the cock hopped up to him with much dignity, and crowed thrice in tones so expressive that I was convinced of their meaning more than cocks do in ordinary.

"Alas! my dear Tarif-Eldin," said the magician, as if replying to some question which the cock had asked, "I fear that your hopes are too sanguine. In spite of his name, this young man seems calculated neither by his age nor his natural strength for so violent an exertion. However, as the bow is luckily in my possession, if you insist upon it, the trial shall be made; but remember, that from the moment you enter your prison, its door must be closed no more to open, till the Facardin arrives destined to free you from your feathers, restore Sapinella's original form, dispel Moussellina's gravity, and devour that fatal toe, in which consists the whole power of our enemy."

Upon hearing this, the cock for a few moments appeared to hesitate, and he hung his head mournfully: but his spirits soon revived. He spread his tail, clapped his wings, and then, turning to the Enchanter, exclaimed in a tone the most resolute, and with an air the most intrepid, "Cock-a-doodle-doo!" He then hopped into the bird-cage with great alacrity, the door of which closed upon him with a thundering noise.

The Enchanter now opening a case of sandal-wood, and

drawing forth a bow of polished steel, requested me to bend it. I hesitated not to obey, but in vain did I first try it one way, and then another. My attitudes, it must be allowed, were uncommonly graceful, but the bow remained unbent; and at length the skin being rubbed off both my hands (which naturally are rather of a delicate texture), I was obliged to relinquish the instrument in despair.

"I thought so!" said the Enchanter, shaking his head mournfully; "it is well that I have three strings to *my* bow! As for this, be it your charge, Sapinella, and remember, that he who bends it, will thereby prove himself the person destined to reverse the ill fortunes of your family. I am now compelled to leave you; henceforth, I am not permitted to visit you, neither is it in my power to prevent the Genius Feridoun from occasionally tormenting you with his presence: but let it be some consolation to know, that whenever he sets his foot upon this mountain, he becomes your slave, not your master, and that my spells will force him to forbear repeating his addresses, or attempting to possess your person by force. Take courage then, my dear niece; however disagreeable the form which your rash vow compels you to assume, remember, that you will one day regain your own, will be married to the Prince of Ophir, have a great many children, and live very happy ever after."

"Alas!" replied the lady, "you forget, most wise Caramoussal, that the provoking stars have decreed, that I never am to marry the Prince of Ophir! But what surprises me most is, that since you are a conjuror, and practise the black art, you did not foresee and prevent all this mischief."

"Sapinella!" replied Caramoussal, with a look of profound wisdom, "though I am an Enchanter, I would have you to know, that I never was taken for a Conjuror before! neither can the power of magic possibly reverse the decrees of fate,

for decrees are decrees, and fate is fate! Be content to know that no exertions on my part shall be wanting to alleviate your sorrows; nor do I quite despair of finding at length a Prince vigorous enough to bend this bow, a mouth as large as your father's, a cock that can fly as high as the emperor, and a rope spun by the hands of three Princesses the most beautiful in the world, long enough to reach from the summit of Mount Atlas to the surface of the sea, and strong enough to bind our inveterate enemy in fetters never to be broken. As for you, young man," continued he, addressing himself to me, "I must not at present satisfy your curiosity respecting your parents; suffice it to know, that you have a brother, who will shortly fall into the power of Feridoun, that Giant whom you have just now seen. Be it your care to deliver him from thence, and in order that you may know him when you meet, behold his figure!"

Here the Enchanter waved his wand. I immediately beheld on the opposite side of the grotto a young man seated on a rose-coloured sofa, and picking his teeth in a careless attitude: the vision lasted but a moment; yet in that short period he found time to yawn thrice, an habit of which (as you probably have already observed) love itself has not been able to cure him. The figure having disappeared, Caramoussal thus continued his discourse.

"Your brother is called Facardin as well as yourself; a name which important reasons have induced me to bestow on various children, in whose fate I feel interested. Feridoun's abode is not easily discovered; but as it is necessary that you should reach it for the purpose of rescuing your brother, I now present you with this phœnix of all coursers, who not only surpasses the winds themselves in fleetness, but will, unbidden, conduct you to those places, where it is most your interest to be."

I heard the latter part of his speech with some surprise. In vain did I look round and round; no courser was to be seen, and yet did Caramoussal continue to enhance the value of his present; assuring me that the animal was sound wind and limb, perfectly free from vice, and altogether as clever a little tit as ever was crossed by a gentleman. And still no horse appeared! At length I began to suspect that my friend the Enchanter was not quite himself, and that he had been endeavouring to settle matters with the Genius over a bottle. This suspicion was confirmed, when conducting me to a corner of the grotto, he pointed to a three-legged stool, and desired me to mount immediately. He then forcibly obliged me to seat myself upon the stool, and thus proceeded.

"Excellent!" said he, with an air of satisfaction; "really, considering that you never were on horseback before, you make a tolerable appearance, and seem to have a very good seat. Now then, nothing is wanting to complete your travelling equipage, except this two-stringed guitar. Take it, and observe, that whenever you strike the silver chord, all who are within hearing will be compelled to dance; and when you strike the golden one, whatever actions are going on at that moment will be continued by the performers during a full hour: on yourself alone the charm will have no effect. Now, then, proceed in search of your brother; and should you meet by the way with any stray legs, arms, heads, or bodies, have the goodness to put them into the green velvet bag, which is suspended under your horse. Remember also, that whenever you wish him to set forwards, you must say—'Chick-ali-allah-mamoud-bizzil-khan'; and that you never must dismount him without first whistling thrice, and rubbing the tip of your nose as often against the bridge of your guitar."

"My dear Doctor," said I, "you must certainly be dreaming! What in the name of heaven can you mean by stray

legs and arms? and as to making this three-legged stool move by merely pronouncing—'Chick-ali-allah-mamoud-bizzil-khan,'—the thing is absolutely impossible."

The words were scarcely out of my mouth, when the stool set off with me, as hard as it could lay its three legs to the ground! It galloped up hill and down dale like a mad thing, leaped over five-barred gates with the greatest agility, and upon reaching the banks of a river, without hesitation it dashed into the water, and soon landed me on the opposite shore. Immediately my wooden courser resumed his speed, and away we went again, as if we had been galloping for a wager. As we passed through a village, the people ran out to wonder at us; the men and women hooted us, and the little boys pelted us with mud, stones, rotten eggs, and dead cats; but all this only served to make my nag go the faster. I cried out to them to stop him, for that I was run away with. Some of them endeavoured to obey me; but whenever they approached the stool to lay hold of it, one of its legs kicked up, and dealt about broken heads and bloody noses with such generosity that the attempt was soon abandoned. The machine continued to proceed, nor stopped, till we reached the gate of an ancient castle.

Notwithstanding the rapidity of my progress, I was not in the least fatigued; it's true, my horse was nothing more than a joint stool, but it was as easy as if it had been an arm-chair! I was occupied in examining the castle's exterior, when the portal grated upon its rusty hinges, and two servants, almost bent double with age, advanced with an entreaty that I would enter, and accept of some refreshment. With this request I readily complied; but nothing could induce me to quit my seat, till I had whistled thrice, and given my nose three gentle rubs against the bridge of my guitar. After this important ceremony I entered the castle; nor was I

a little pleased, nor my companions a little surprised, at observing that the stool came trotting after me, and never suffered me to go out of its sight. This induced me to hope that the machine was growing attached to me; and desirous of encouraging this predilection, I failed not occasionally to pat it upon the back, and seize every means of showing that I was satisfied with its services.

My guides crawled on so slowly that I had full leisure to observe the apartments through which we passed. They were magnificently furnished, but all in an antiquated taste; old tapestry, old books, old pictures, old chairs; everything was old, and seemed of a piece with my conductors. They ushered me into a small octagon chamber, and I now begged to know their master's name.

"We have no master," was the reply. "This castle belongs to a Princess, to whom you will be introduced as soon as you are old enough."

I thought this a very strange condition, and begged to know at what age her Highness would think me presentable. I was answered, that natives of that country did not presume to appear at court till they were turned of sixty; but that, in consideration of my being a stranger, ten full years would be abated. I hastened to assure the domestics that, anxious as I was to be acquainted with their mistress, still I could not possibly wait thirty years for that honour; that I was obliged to proceed on my journey immediately; but that I should take care to return and pay my respects to her Highness as soon as I should be decently decrepit.

"You mistake me," interrupted one of the old men. "As a stranger, it will be sufficient for you to *look* old; and, provided you do but wear the appearance of age, your possessing the vigour of youth is a defect which you will find the Princess very ready to forgive in you. You are

to know that she once was a mistress of the Genius Feridoun; but being grown old, and consequently neglected, she retired from the world in disgust, and now keeps her court in this ancient castle. In order to preserve her eyes from being offended by the sight of that youth and beauty in others which she no longer possesses herself, nothing but what is old is suffered to approach her, and her court is composed entirely of superannuated belles and beaux in their dotage. A talisman placed here by Feridoun preserves in our hearts our youthful passions: we love, intrigue, quarrel, and fight, as if we were still in the bloom of seventeen, and to a stranger this sight will probably appear entertaining. Here you will find four antiquated couples tottering through a cotillon in spectacles; while there a circle of seniors, with trumpets at their ears, are fascinated by the vocal powers of a toothless toast. In one room you will admire two fiery dotards burning with rage, anxious to fight, but unable to draw their swords; and in another you will see a wrinkled beauty of fourscore snatch her shrivelled hand from her drivelling adorer, refuse him in disdain one of her five remaining hairs, and exclaim against the wiles of wicked man, and the too easy faith of unsuspecting woman."

This account piqued my curiosity, and having nothing better to do, I accepted the services of the old domestics, who hastened to equip me for their lady's presence-chamber. They began by fixing a grey wig upon my head, and then fastened under my chin a beard, whose length was truly respectable. After this, they drew red circles round my eyes, traced several wrinkles on my forehead, and in a quarter of an hour rendered my appearance so venerable, that when I first looked in the glass, I involuntarily made myself a low bow. The servants now withdrew to announce my arrival to their mistress.

Scarcely was I left alone, when the sound of complaint attracted my attention. I listened, and heard a voice which seemed to be in the room, bemoan its hard fate, call the stars cruel, and (as is usual on such occasions) invite death to put an end to its sorrows. As I could discover nobody except myself in the chamber, and as the voice seemed to be close at my elbow, I was somewhat puzzled by this occurrence. Presently, I felt something treading upon my toes: I looked down: it was the joint-stool, which had taken that mode of attracting my attention, and which having obtained it, marched before me towards a corner-cupboard. It was fastened, and as I have always been told that it is extremely wrong to pick a lock, I judged that it would be much more genteel to break the door open. I did so, and found in it a tortoise-shell box, which I examined without delay. What was my surprise at finding a pair of lips of the most rosy freshness, whose continual motion (as well as that of the tongue, which I could perceive occasionally) left me no doubt from whence the voice proceeded!

This circumstance embarrassed me not a little. In vain did I endeavour to unravel it, but could only ascertain that, from their incessant motion, the lips must certainly have belonged to a woman. Still the complaints continued; I listened to them attentively, and at length heard some sentences which cleared up my doubts at once.

"No!" said the voice, "never was wretchedness equal to mine! Never before was woman chopped in pieces, because her daughter refused to marry a man ten yards high! Oh! if I had my eyes again, I should certainly cry them out at thinking to how ignoble an office my bosom is fated, that bosom of which I was once so proud! And shall that harridan of a Princess possess it for ever? No! let but the rest of me be put together again, and soon will I have

my bosom back in spite of her teeth; or rather in spite of *mine*, for alas! the traitress has got possession of *them* too! As for my other limbs, heaven only knows what is become of them; but I am terribly afraid that my legs are fallen into bad hands. Ah! if that defect in them which I so carefully concealed from every eye should be discovered. . . . Insupportable thought! Heaven and earth! I should certainly expire with shame, were it once publicly known that my legs are bandy!"

So pathetic was the tone in which these last words were pronounced, that I could not refrain from weeping. I asked the lips several questions, but to no purpose; indeed I found afterwards, that the ears, which ought to have heard me, were at that time about three thousand leagues off. However, I had no doubt but that these very lips were part of the stray limbs recommended to my care by Caramoussal, and I immediately deposited them in the green velvet bag. This was scarcely done, when the servants returned to conduct me to the Princess; I followed them, and my three-legged companion trotted after me.

The Princess Chinchinosa (for that was her name), it seems, had been a favourite of Feridoun; I could not by any means admire Feridoun's taste. She might indeed have been handsome once, but I should never have suspected it. Her skin was like so much tanned leather: her high cheek-bones, daubed thickly over with paint, seemed ready to pierce through the skin which covered them: and not having hair enough left with which to fasten it on, her monstrous flaxen periwig got a little more on one side with every movement; so that by the time that I had been in the room a quarter of an hour, it had made half the circuit of her head, and the hind part hung down before. She sat upon a lofty throne surrounded by her courtiers, whose

nodding heads and trembling hands made me think at first that I had got among a parcel of shaking mandarins at a china shop. The ladies of the bed-chamber were all turned of fourscore; every maid of honour was at least in her grand climacteric; and there was not a staff officer in her whole army who did not go upon crutches. Such was the court of the Princess Chinchinosa.

She received me very graciously, and at dinner I was placed at her right hand. I soon found that spoon meat was in great request; not but that there was a variety of other dishes, such as old mutton, large beef, and full grown fowls. But as for lamb and veal they were forbidden food; the Princess would have fainted at the sight of a chicken; and a pigeon, to which I was helped, proved so extremely old and tough, that in my conscience I believe it was the same that carried Noah the olive branch. During dinner, there was a concert, at which nothing but old music was performed; and between the instrumental pieces, a Soprano (who looked like Methusaleh) favoured us by warbling Solomon's song. His hands trembled so that he could hardly hold the music-book, and his voice being extremely infirm, I could not but allow that his shake was wonderful. However, I did not much attend to the music; another object engrossed all my attention.

Her Highness's nose and chin being of an immoderate length, and meeting so close that a walnut placed between them would have remained there firmly, she was obliged to introduce her food into her mouth at one corner. Luckily that mouth was so large that she accomplished the point without difficulty, and in doing it took care to display two rows of teeth admirable for their regularity and whiteness. She saw that I remarked them, and, willing to complete her supposed conquest, she made the heat a pretext for removing

the gauze from her neck, and discovering a bosom of which a Grace need not have been ashamed. I no sooner beheld it than I was convinced that both this and the teeth belonged to the lips already in my possession. Instantly I started from my seat, with one hand cut a flesh-coloured string which fastened the bosom to the back of her Highness's scraggy neck, and with the other clapped it into my bag, without saying a syllable.

Chinchinosa's surprise and rage at first choked her utterance. No sooner did she recover herself than she seized a plate, intending to throw it at my head, and prepared to utter a volley of execrations, the first word of which I verily believe to have been nothing less than "Damnation!" Before she could execute either the one or the other design, I struck the golden string of my guitar. Instantly her hand remained with the plate suspended in the air, her lips continued to move with incredible velocity, and she continued to repeat—"Damn, damn, damn, damn,"—without being able to bring out another syllable. Nor was the effect produced upon the spectators less strong. The high steward, who was drinking, was unable to take the cup from his lips, and swallowed such a quantity of liquor that I expected to see him burst every moment. His wife, who was fanning herself violently, soon knocked off the mounting, and continued to shake the bare sticks. The chief cadi was repeating an interesting anecdote; but, instead of making any progress in it, he repeated the same sentence over and over and over again, while his hearers listened as attentively as if they had never heard it before. Two old generals, who were shaking hands, continued to wring each other's fingers till I thought that they would all have dropped off; and the Master of the Horse, being employed in treading affectionately on the toes of the maid of honour who sat next to him, remained

so long in this attitude that the poor creature (who happened to have corns) roared aloud with all her might and main. Above all, I was amused by an old lady of the bed-chamber, who having just filled her mouth with a piece of burning hot pudding, was unable to get rid of it, and persevered in tossing it from one side to the other with such horrible wry faces as would have provoked laughter in Mahomet himself. I now prepared for my departure; but first I made bold to strip Chinchinosa's mouth of its borrowed ornaments. These also I put carefully into my bag; then seating myself on the tripod, I pronounced — "Chick-ali-allah-mamoud-bizzil-khan!"—on which it gave a great jump, darted with me out of the window, and I soon lost sight of the castle and its environs.

I was well satisfied with the issue of this adventure, and still better with my wooden horse, who for a flying leap was without his equal. We soon reached the gates of a noble city. Not choosing to make too conspicuous a figure, I quitted my seat after using the necessary precautions, and entered the city on foot; but my companion attracted such universal notice, and the crowd which followed us created such a disturbance, that as we passed the prime minister's palace he was induced to appear in his balcony. Struck with surprise at the sight of this animated machine, he gave orders that both of us should be conducted into his presence. This command I readily obeyed, and the stool trotted upstairs after me of its own accord.

My reception was very gracious. I took care to keep my birth and station in life a secret, which (as I knew nothing about them myself) was a matter of no great difficulty: however, I failed not occasionally to throw out certain little hints, which, by saying nothing and implying a great deal, made the minister understand that I was a

person of no slight importance. On his part, he informed me that I was then in the capital of the Danish dominions; and he begged me very politely to make use of his house during my stay at Copenhagen, a request with which I was condescending enough to comply.

At night I was conducted to a superb apartment. I could not help expressing to the domestics who were appointed to attend me, my surprise that, among all his civilities, their lord had not offered to present me at court. A flood of tears was the first answer to this observation; after which they informed me that the whole royal family had suddenly disappeared in a most unaccountable manner, and that the supreme power was for the present exercised by the chief minister alone. They also entreated me not to mention this subject before their lord, whose grief had been excessive on this occasion; and they even hinted that a tender attachment to her Majesty was suspected to have no small share in producing so violent an affliction.

The domestics now left me: I retired to my couch, where I soon fell into a profound sleep; but the tripod did not suffer me to enjoy it long. As its movements seemed to insist upon my rising, I took my guitar, and followed the most intelligent of all movables through a long gallery, which led to the minister's own bed-chamber. Unwilling to disturb him at an hour so unseasonable, I would not enter; but I made no scruple of looking through the keyhole, which (I thought) could do no harm to anybody. My surprise at what I beheld was excessive! The minister, a grave, stately man, with a white beard, was on his knees, while he addressed the most passionate and pathetic speeches to a pair of the bandiest legs that ever were covered by a petticoat! It is true, to set them off a little, they were clothed in flame-coloured stockings, with silver clocks; and

I remarked that, in spite of their crookedness, they walked up and down the room with an air of extraordinary dignity!

"Oh ho!" said I to myself; "these legs must certainly belong to the lips and bosom in my green velvet bag: they must needs become their companions."

But how was this to be managed? the door was locked, and the key on the inside. However, accidentally applying my shoulder to one part, and my knee to another, at the same time through mere inattention giving a tolerably hard push against it, as good luck would have it, the door happened to fly open! at that moment the right leg was replying to a tender speech of the minister's by a tolerably hard kick upon the left cheek. I walked straight up to them, took one in each hand, and in spite of all their struggling, deposited them very quietly in my green velvet bag.

Most extravagant was the rage of the prime minister! he called loudly for his servants to throw me out of the window; a ceremony which in my opinion was quite unnecessary. Desirous, therefore, to save the poor fellows the trouble of coming upstairs, I now tried for the first time the silver cord of my guitar. No sooner had I struck it, than the minister seemed to have been stung by a Tarantula. In vain did he strive to repress his desire to dance, a desire so unbecoming his age and station! First he extended *one* arm, then the other; now he lifted the left leg, and now the right; till at length he set off at full speed, and danced the Hays round two elbow chairs with wonderful activity. I could not restrain my mirth, when I saw the old gentleman (his cheeks glowing with rage and his eyes flashing fire) frisk away, snap his fingers, nod his head, figure in and out between the chairs, and every now and then set to a corner cupboard. But my attention was soon called to quiet a disturbance, which had

taken place in the green velvet bag. It seems the rage for dancing had communicated itself to the flame-coloured legs; they were footing it away at an astonishing rate; while the lips complained aloud that they were kicked black and blue, and the bosom sent forth such sighs, as if its very heart was breaking. This being the case, I thought fit to put an end to the ball. I forbore to strike my guitar, seated myself on the joint-stool, and it sprang with me through the window, just as the minister came tumbling upon the floor, quite out of breath, and totally exhausted.

I will pass over the three next years of my life, whose events were wholly unimportant, and hasten to the period when I encountered my brother for the first time. One day, the friendly Enchanter suddenly appeared before me, as I was reposing myself upon the shore of the Red Sea.

"Youth," said he, "I am well satisfied with your obedience: you have secured those limbs, about which I was most anxious, and now I have only to find the nose and the left hip. But the time is arrived when your brother requires your assistance: hasten then to Feridoun's island, and release him from his disgraceful captivity; but in order to accomplish that desirable event, you must first assume this necessary disguise."

With these words he presented me with a female dress and assisted me in the arrangement of it. He proved to be a very dexterous attendant, and contrived to set off my person to such advantage, that when I peeped into my only looking-glass (the Red Sea, whose billows washed my feet), a very smart young woman presented herself in the watery mirror. One circumstance, indeed, by no means contributed to give me a feminine appearance. I had not shaved for two days, and my beard being naturally rather black and bushy, it formed a very striking contrast with the snow-white muslin

in which my head was enveloped. No sooner did I mention this than Caramoussal (who really is a sharp active fellow, and can turn his hand to anything) drew out a shaving case, caught me by the nose, and whipped off my beard in the twinkling of an eye. This done, he took the green velvet bag in his hand, bade me adieu, and vanished.

I was now left to my own thoughts; I did not indulge them long, for I was of opinion that in order to support a female character naturally, the less that I thought the better. Not doubting that my joint-stool was acquainted with the nearest road to Feridoun's habitation, I seated myself upon it as usual, and began to pronounce the charm, when to my utter astonishment the stool slipped from under me, and I fell upon my nose with a terrible flump. I was not a little displeased at this practical jest; but resolving not to give up the point, I endeavoured to reseat myself: the tripod proved too cunning for me: aware of my design, it would not suffer me to approach within arm's length of it, nor was it till after an hour's chase that I succeeded in catching it. Scarcely did I grasp its fore-leg, when suddenly I felt myself seized and lifted into the air. Greatly was I alarmed at discovering that a monstrous bird called a Roc, had pounced me, and was bearing me through the atmosphere in his talons. You may be sure that I did not spare my lungs on this occasion, and a pair of tolerable ears might have heard my cries from the Red Sea to Jerusalem.

A few moments only had elapsed, when I saw something glitter beneath me. The bird descended straight towards it, and I soon found myself on an island apparently composed of crystal; upon which the beams of the sun were playing and tinging it with a variety of colours, the most beautiful and brilliant. Instantly the bird was metamorphosed into a female, the deformity of whose person and countenance

was by no means compensated by the magnificence of her dress.

"Be not alarmed, lovely lady," said she in a gentle voice: "If you prove the woman for whom I take you, you have it in your power to render a signal service to the Genius Feridoun, and in return may reckon upon his most fervent gratitude, but should I find myself mistaken in the person, I will immediately either convey you back to the spot where I found you, or transport you to any part of the globe which you may think proper to point out. Now follow me to my sovereign."

She then conducted me down a magnificent staircase of crystal, till we reached a spacious saloon. Here, on a throne of coral, sat the Giant, whom I had already seen upon Mount Atlas. He seemed greatly puzzled about something, and was entertaining himself with an immense magic lantern. My conductress interrupted him.

"Illustrious lord!" said she, "look upon this damsel; in my opinion her beauty far excels that of the Princess Nour."

The Genius forbore to answer, till he had put on his spectacles. They were formed of two enormous telescopes, and with these he examined me for some minutes with great attention. In the meanwhile I affected to blush, and fix my eyes through modesty on the ground.

"In point of beauty," he replied, "you are certainly right; but charms alone will not answer my purpose: I must first know whether she is of royal blood—come hither, pretty one: pray, where were you born?"

After a pause, during which I seemed to struggle with excess of timidity, I made a low reverence, and replied in a feigned voice—"wherever your Excellency pleases."

"You are extremely obliging," answered he; "but as that

does not quite resolve my question, I should be glad to know who were your parents?"

"To the best of my knowledge," said I, after a few moments passed in reflection; "to the best of my knowledge they were my father and mother."

"So I should suppose!" cried the Giant impatiently. "Why the girl is an idiot! what I want to know is, what were their names and stations in life?"

"My lord," answered I, "they never thought proper to tell me of their own accord, and Mahomet forbid that I should have been so indiscreet as to ask them any such impertinent questions."

"Why, I protest," exclaimed Feridoun, "you are a very paragon of prudence! But as I am not likely to gain much information from you, we may as well break off our discourse. Cadiga, conduct her to the Princess Nour, while I endeavour to discover by my books that of which she seems herself to be so ignorant. Go, my pretty simplicity; Cadiga will furnish you with playthings, and you may have as many almonds and raisins as you can manage to eat."

I thanked him with an awkward childish air, and then followed Cadiga, mincing my steps as much as possible, and mostly walking upon tip-toe. I was now ushered into an apartment, formed also of crystal. But curtains of gold stuff were suspended round the walls, and effectually prevented the persons within from being seen by those without. At the farther end of the room was a sofa, on which sat a young lady of exquisite beauty. She was splendidly dressed, and was singing a plaintive air to her lute. Cadiga now bade me adieu, and retired, locking the door after her.

The joint-stool all this while had remained in my hand without motion. Its weight, added to that of the guitar, was by no means inconsiderable; I was not sorry therefore

to set it on the ground. No sooner was it at liberty, than it ran towards the lady, tumbled itself at her feet, and, as far as I could guess from its movements, seemed to express great joy at the sight of her. Without paying it any attention, the stranger rose, and came towards me with open arms.

"Welcome," she began, "welcome, lovely Princess, to this odious prison! I am well aware that in you I behold one of these unhappy beauties who are destined to share with me the task of spinning the cord, on which depends the preservation of our tyrant's power; but I am still ignorant, whether you are the adorable Sapinella of Jutland, or the divine Moussellina of Astracan. Answer me, amiable stranger; whom do I embrace at this moment?"

Thus saying, she extended her arms towards me, and I was not behind hand in opening mine: unluckily, the joint-stool, who had no arms to spread, was provoked at seeing ours in that attitude; and just as we were on the point of embracing, it very impolitely pushed itself between us so suddenly that I was very near tumbling over it head foremost. I made two or three more attempts with no better success; till finding, that whenever I approached the lady, the inconvenient tripod never failed to tread upon my toes, break my shins, or kick my ankles, I gave up the point, and resolved to make a virtue of necessity. Accordingly, I declared my sex, and requested to know whether she could give me any intelligence of my brother. On finding that she had offered to embrace a man, the fair stranger endeavoured to blush: she did not succeed, but I gave her great credit for the attempt. She then launched out in praise of the propriety of my conduct; protested that she should have been shocked to death, had she kissed a male creature; and thanked me in very strong terms for having made my confession, though I saw that in her heart she

would have been quite as well pleased if I had kept it to myself. She then desired me to be seated; I obeyed, and placed myself by her on the sofa; but the jealous joint-stool took care to squeeze himself in between us.

"If by your brother," began the Princess, "you mean the warrior who calls himself Facardin, I can only inform you that he is now upon this island, and is a great favourite of Feridoun, and a still greater of his wife. Not that I have seen him myself, being never suffered to quit this apartment; nor is he likely to visit me, as Cadiga informs me that he professes an invincible antipathy to women. I know no more about your brother, whose rescue, I hope, you will speedily accomplish. My own deliverance, I fear, is far off: I am guarded by a thousand indissoluble spells, and, alas! the chains which I wear were forged by my own imprudence."

HISTORY OF NOUR, PRINCESS OF SERENDIP

My father, who was sovereign of Serendip, died when I was scarcely fourteen, and left me his sole heiress. I was sought in marriage by a multitude of admirers, but none made himself so agreeable to me as Zemin, Prince of Fez. Not that there was anything particularly captivating either in his figure or his face; neither was his wit very brilliant, nor his understanding uncommonly profound; but then he was extremely good-humoured, and composed the very best riddles that I ever read in my life. Besides, he was so merry and comical that he kept me in a fit of laughter from morning till night; and when I add that he danced perfectly well, and had very white teeth, you will easily conceive that I loved him to distraction.

On the day preceding that fixed for our marriage, as we sat in a bower of my gardens, Zemin happened to praise the

workmanship of a certain chest, which stood in his chamber. His account of it excited my curiosity, and it was sent for. It proved to be made of sandal-wood, but its greatest ornament consisted in a number of golden figures inlaid upon the lid, on which they moved about as if they were alive, performed dances, fought battles, and were perfectly obedient to the commands of Zemin. At length I inquired what the box contained. With surprise I learned that my lover was ignorant himself. A dervish, who was then dead, had made him a present of it; at the same time assuring him that if he dared to open it without the Genius Feridoun's permission, he would expose himself to the most dreadful misfortunes.

No sooner did I hear this than I resolved to try my influence over Zemin, by compelling him to open the chest. In vain did he remonstrate, and as he still persisted in refusing compliance, I threw myself into an agony of passion, and at length pretended to faint. Zemin could not stand this trial of his affection. He seized the chest, touched a secret spring known only to himself, and the lid instantly flying off, he drew forth the contents, and laid them at my feet. Of course I immediately recovered from my swoon, in order to examine his present. It consisted of a steel bow, and an arrow with a golden head. But no sooner were they out of Zemin's hand, than an enormous bird (shaped and coloured like a cock, but neither whose size nor flight resembled that animal's) darted from above, seized the bow and arrow, and was out of sight with them in an instant.

This incident was strange, but the next was terrible. Suddenly the ground opened at a few paces distant from us, and a black shaggy gigantic arm coming out of it, grasped my two hands, and dragged me into the cavity. Zemin, who was staring after the feathered robber with his

mouth wide open, was alarmed by my cries. He flew to assist me, and was just in time to catch me by the feet. By these he attempted to draw me back again; and the shaggy arm persisting in pulling me down, while my lover persisted in pulling me up, I was see-sawed in this manner for a full half hour, than which nothing could be more disagreeable. At length a violent exertion of the shaggy arm compelled Zemin to let go his hold. Down I went head foremost; the earth closed over me, and for this time I fainted in good earnest.

On recovering, I found myself in this apartment, and attended by Cadiga, who informed me that I was in the power of the Genius Feridoun. I inquired for what crime I was thus imprisoned. She replied, that her master was highly offended with me for having been the means of throwing the enchanted bow and arrow into the power of his enemy Caramoussal: but this was not his only motive in carrying me off. It seems that there exist three spinning-wheels, which being put into the hands of the three most beautiful Princesses in the universe, will fabricate a cord, long enough to reach from the summit of Mount Atlas to the surface of the sea, and strong enough to fetter the three sons of the Enchantress, Mergian-Banou, whose magic powers are alone equal to contend against Feridoun's. By various stratagems he has obtained possession of two of these spinning-wheels; and as he daily hopes to make himself master of the third, he naturally is anxious to discover the three Princesses destined to make use of these cabalistical machines. For this purpose, he procured the baptismal registers of all the Princesses at present in existence. He then, by means of an enchanted lantern, caused them all to pass in review before him, and adjudged the palm of beauty to Moussellina of Astracan, Sapinella of Jutland, and your

humble servant. To assure himself that his selection was correct, he next summoned the three most beautiful Princesses in the world to appear. First came Moussellina; good!—Then appeared Sapinella; better!—But now, when it was *my* turn to advance, lo! and behold! in walked a lady veiled from head to foot, and whose stature sufficiently declared that she was not the Princess of Serendip. This has puzzled the Genius not a little. Though frequently repeated, the trial has never met with better success. Every time that he summons the Princesses by their names, he is more and more convinced that I am one of the charming trio: but no sooner does he call for the three most beautiful Princesses, than in steps this veiled lady, and puts all his ideas in confusion. Cadiga, under the form of a Roc, is frequently despatched abroad, in hopes of making some discovery; nor do I doubt, noble stranger," continued the Princess Nour, addressing herself to me, "that, deceived by your dress, she fancied that you might possibly be that mysterious fair one, and under that persuasion conveyed you to Feridoun's island. Should this be the case, I can only advise you to——"

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"I can't hear one word they say!" cried some one above us in an angry tone.

We both started from the sofa, and looked upwards: to my utter astonishment I beheld my former mistress, Crystallina, perched upon the transparent roof, which (not being so thick as the walls) happened at this moment to give way with a loud crash, and the paragon of curiosity came tumbling into the middle of the room. We ran to her assistance, and found, that in spite of so dangerous an accident, she would escape with a black eye and two or three contusions. She now thought proper to apologise

for so abrupt an entrance. She stated, that learning from her attendants that two unknown persons were concealed in this apartment, she could not but feel anxious to take a peep at them; that as the door was locked, she made bold to procure a ladder and look in at the roof; and she finished by entreating to know who we were, as she was extremely curious to learn our histories.

Nour (who had good reasons for pardoning the faults of curiosity) readily promised to content Crystallina: but I had other business in hand. The stool having given me several hints that it was time to resume our journey, I pronounced the usual charm, on which it sprang with me through the fractured ceiling, and soon landed me in the saloon, where I had been presented to the Genius. He was absent himself, but in his stead I beheld a person much more welcome to me: it was my brother, who holding the magic lantern, gazed with great earnestness on the opposite wall, where appeared the figure of a beautiful female: her countenance was extremely grave, and above her head was inscribed in characters of fire—"Moussellina the Serious, Princess of Astracan."

I hastened to embrace him, and expected him to be greatly surprised at hearing me salute him as my brother: but it seems that Caramoussal had already informed him in a dream both of my relationship and my disguise. He received me, therefore, with much cordiality, but little astonishment. I explained to him the virtues of my tripod, and proposed, that we should make use of them to quit Feridoun's dominions. He embraced my offer without hesitation.

"You cannot do me a greater favour," said he, "for of all the islands in the universe, this island is the dullest, and its mistress is the most tiresome person under the sun, except its

master. Besides, happening to enter this apartment, I found this magic lantern, and the lamp being lighted, to keep myself from going to sleep I began to play with it. You see the figure which presented itself; nothing can be more lovely, and I was just thinking how much I should be delighted to throw myself at the feet of the original, if travelling all the way to Astracan were not so extremely troublesome. However, your equipage obviates this difficulty, and (if your praise of its expedition be not exaggerated) I shall soon find myself in the presence of the incomparable Moussellina."

I challenged him to an immediate trial of the merits of my stool: it was large enough to carry double with ease; we seated ourselves, and it set off at full speed. We soon reached the sea, into which the intrepid machine plunged without hesitation, and landed us safe on the opposite shore. Here Caramoussal was waiting for us; he gave me great credit for the manner in which I had executed my commission; at the same time informing me that as no one could enter Feridoun's island without its master's permission, he had been obliged to disguise me, in order that the Genius might introduce me there himself. Then restoring my male apparel, and ordering us to hasten to Astracan, he embraced us affectionately, and then disappeared.

We obeyed him, and travelled forward with great celerity; though my brother frequently complained of not being able to lean back. However, in spite of this inconvenience, the drowsiness of his nature so far got the better of him, that when we were about two days' journey from Astracan, he fell asleep in broad day-light, and losing his seat, in the middle of a sound nap, came tumbling upon the ground. The machine stopped of its own accord; but in my anxiety for his safety, I forgot everything else, and sprang off the stool without taking the necessary precautions. No whist-

ling was thought of! No guitar-bridge was remembered! Fraternal affection took entire possession of my mind! My brother was luckily unhurt; he yawned, rubbed his eyes, and rose; but even his apathy was not quite proof against astonishment, when he saw the joint-stool raise itself upon its hind legs, split its third leg into two arms (between which sprouted out an head and shoulders), and at length present to us the form of a youth, of diminutive but elegant form, and of a countenance, though not handsome, remarkably engaging.

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"I am sorry for it," exclaimed Dinarzade, "with all my heart and soul. Let me die, if this be not another prince, with another history, which will prove as long and as tedious as those of the princes, his predecessors."

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"Fair Dinarzade," replied Facardin of Trebizonde, "as frequently is the case with you, you are perfectly mistaken." This stranger was no other than Zemin, whose adventures you have already heard related by the Princess Nour. The Genius having, in his wrath, changed him into a three-legged stool, Caramoussal took pity on him; and as one spell can only be reversed by another, he promised that Zemin should regain his original shape, whenever the person who sat upon him should rise without first complying with certain conditions. On giving him to me, and endowing him with peculiar powers of velocity and discretion, the Enchanter was compelled to make those conditions known to me. I had neglected to fulfil them, and in consequence Zemin had regained his proper form.

He thanked us in very strong terms for the service which we had rendered him, though we could not help wishing that it had been delayed eight and forty hours

longer. His magic speed would have conveyed us in two days to Astracan, which, in the common mode of travelling, we had no hopes of reaching under a month. However, we concealed our chagrin from Zemin, and accepted the offer of his company to Astracan. On our arrival we found that the Princess was absent on her usual tour, but were advised to meet her on the banks of this river, where she would not fail to appear at a stated period, and where the grand laughing trial was to take place. Hither then we hastened, each having adopted that dress which seemed most likely to excite ludicrous ideas. Zemin, in remembrance of that bird which robbed him of the fatal bow and arrow, has chosen the resemblance of a cock. For my part, a whimsical fellow whom I encountered the other day, and who made himself extremely ridiculous by his admiration of a lady's slipper, which he wore in his helmet, suggested to me the dress which you saw me wear this morning.

I now come to the most unfortunate adventure of my life, or shall I rather say the most fortunate! But a few days are past since I recognised at a distance the royal music of Astracan. Not doubting but that the Princess was at hand, we hastened towards it. Suddenly we heard loud shrieks proceeding from the banks of a river, and on looking round we descried two strangers mounted on camels; one of whom being unable to restrain the animal on which he rode, was carried by him into the water. We quickened our pace in hopes of assisting him; but being at some distance, when we reached the spot neither men nor camels were discernible. Nothing was to be seen except some loose papers floating upon the water.

Suddenly I perceived something glittering at my feet. It proved to be a gold box studded with sapphires, and which probably had been dropped by one of the two

strangers. I opened it. That moment decided my fate! I beheld the portrait of a female so exquisitely beautiful, that from the first moment I felt my happiness to depend on my possessing the original, and every succeeding minute has confirmed that conviction. Judge, then, what must be my grief, when my brother assured me that, by means of Feridoun's magic lantern, having seen all the princesses in existence, he beheld no face in the least resembling this portrait; yet that it must represent a princess is sufficiently proved by the diadem upon her brow. Alas! she was doubtless some ante-diluvian toast! Some fair one, who was in vogue about the time of the building of Babel! otherwise her beauty must already have rendered her celebrated, and the sighs of innumerable adorers have thundered her name through the universe. Judge, noble stranger, whether I have praised her too highly.

Here, continued the Prince of Trebizonde, he put the gold box into my hand. What was my surprise, my joy, my ecstasy, when I recognised a portrait which I had lost, and which was the exact resemblance of——

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"Of whom?" interrupted Dinarzade eagerly.

"Of a person," continued Facardin, "whose name must never pass my lips. No, Caramoussal; I will preserve my oath to you inviolate, however hard may be the task, however strong may be the temptation."

Here the Prince paused for a few minutes; he sighed deeply; his eyes were suffused with tears. However, he soon recovered himself, and resumed his narration in these words:

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The joy with which I surveyed the portrait, did not escape its admirer. He eagerly inquired whether I recog-

nised the features? I replied in the affirmative; adding, that it represented a Princess, who had been buried at least ten years. The gaiety with which I gave this intelligence, greatly offended the enamoured knight. I endeavoured to appease him.

Who the lady was, said I, I am not at liberty to reveal; but though she is dead and buried, I can assure you, that your passion is likely to meet with a return. One part of Caramoussal's prediction is accomplished; this portrait, at the sight of which your heart for the first time throbbed with real love, will doubtless prove cold and insensible; and though it is in your possession, I presume you have no thoughts of making that piece of ivory your wife. One part of the oracle is still unfulfilled—"The first object which he loves," said the Enchanter, "he shall love for ever."—Prove this to be true, and all may yet be well. But above all, take no offence at anything that I may do or say. Be assured, that my favour is at present of no slight consequence to you, and that my good word will have great influence upon the success of your amours.

Facardin of the Grotto entreated me to be more explicit; but finding me resolute in silence, he woke his brother (who during this conversation had fallen asleep), took a cordial leave of me, and then my two namesakes retired to their own apartments.

Next morning I was roused by a message from Moussellina, who was impatient to see me, and my spinning-wheel. I dressed myself in haste, and (wheel in hand) soon entered the royal tent. The whole court was assembled there, and even Crystallina; for in spite of the affronts which she had received on the preceding evening, curiosity to hear the story of Fortimbrass would not permit her to be absent. On my entrance a chair of state was presented to me.

"Spin!" said the Princess, as soon as I was seated:—"Spin!"

I obeyed; she followed my example. No sooner did we turn the handles of our wheels, than the third appeared at the top of the tent, accompanied by the two beautiful arms which had made use of it on the former evening. The Princess rose, and made a low reverence, as if to thank them for taking so much trouble upon her account. On the contrary, Fortimbrass, who sat near his niece, immediately burst into a flood of tears.

"You do well, my dear niece," said he, "in showing attention to so near a relation. Alas! those lovely hands are the cause of all my woes, and yet with what tender delight does the sight of them inspire me! But I fear that I am not quite intelligible. Listen then, charming Mousselina, and compassionate my sufferings."

An universal silence instantly prevailed through the tent, and Fortimbrass commenced his narrative as follows:—

HISTORY OF FORTIMBRASS, KING OF DENMARK

Though my birth on the mother's side is illustrious, I must own with blushes that my father was a plebeian. Bedreddin was the son of a respectable pastry-cook in Samarcand, and from his earliest years evinced a natural turn for his father's profession. In particular, his pigeon pies were inimitable; but unluckily happening to season one with ratsbane instead of pepper, which occasioned the death of the favourite Sultana, the Mufti, and a sky-blue lap dog, of which the king was particularly fond, he was obliged to make a precipitate retreat from Samarcand. It was rumoured, indeed, that he might have been forgiven for the deaths of the Queen and the Mufti, for his Samarcandish majesty very sagaciously

observed,—"Women and parsons are to be found in plenty everywhere, but where can I find another sky-blue lap dog?" In short, the dog proved my father's ruin, who for several years wandered about the world in the most abject poverty.

Chance at length conducted him to the island on which the enchantress Mergian-Banou had fixed her residence. His person pleased her eye, and his pigeon pies her palate. To fix so admirable a cook for ever in her service, she resolved to marry him; but, previous to the nuptials, she took the precaution of rooting every twig of hemlock and nightshade out of the island. This proceeding was by no means unnecessary, for often did my father feel a strong inclination to treat her with a taste of such a pigeon pie as he had served up to the sky-blue lap dog. This being out of the case, he endeavoured to bear Mergian-Banou's ill-temper (which, in truth, was diabolical) with patience; and, upon the whole, they lived together very tolerably for man and wife, though extremely ill for man and woman. Three children were the fruits of their union, one of which I had the honour to be.

At the age of sixty, death paid a visit to Bedreddin; for though my mother could prolong her own days, her power did not extend to prolonging those of other people. No sooner was her husband dead, than she felt the loss of him most severely. Deprived of the exercise of kicking and cuffing him, she could find no use upon earth for her arms and legs. Her appetite left her entirely, for no dish was now so well seasoned as Bedreddin's pigeon pies. So exquisite had been her pleasure in scolding him, that scolding other people appeared quite insipid to her; her tongue remained motionless; she left off talking entirely. When matters were come to such a pitch as this, I knew that the

business must be nearly over with her. In short, she resolved to follow her husband to the grave, in hopes of eating pigeon-pies with him in Paradise. In consequence, she neglected the usual means of prolonging her existence. In vain did my brothers and myself implore her to change this fatal resolution; she paid no more regard to our remonstrances than if they had been her husband's.

"It's extremely hard," said she, angrily, "that I may not so much as die to please myself; but certainly it must be the will of the stars that I should be thwarted in everything. However, your disobedience shall not prevent my performing the part of a good mother. I have it in my power to make two of my sons sovereigns, while the third will become possessed of my magic art, a lot by no means the least valuable. Come, then, my children; let each of you draw a paper from this bag of green velvet, and you will know the portions allotted to you by fate."

We obeyed. Each drew forth a sealed paper, and examined its contents with eagerness. The kingdom of Denmark fell to my own share, that of China to Tarif-Eldin's, while to Caramoussal (the eldest of us) was allotted our mother's magic art.

"Nor shall my kindness stop here," resumed Mergian-Banou. "Behold these three ebony spinning-wheels; in them are contained those potent spells which hold in submission the spirits of earth and air, of fire and water! No one can deprive you of them by force, nor even by artifice, except a *woman*. Be careful, therefore, never to trust them out of your own keeping, till you can place them in the hands of the three most beautiful princesses in the universe. These lovely persons must then spin a cord long enough to reach from the summit of Mount Atlas to the surface of the sea; the possession of which, my sons, you must afterwards

decide by lot. He to whose share it falls will become sovereign, not only over his brothers, but over all the genii and sorcerers who exist; and in particular, will be enabled to bind with that rope in everlasting fetters the giant Feridoun, the mortal enemy of my race. But, above all, you must take care to make no mistake respecting the beauty of the royal damsels to whom you intrust the wheels, for unless they are the *most* beautiful, the charm will have no effect."

"Mother," replied Caramoussal, after a short conference in private with Tarif-Eldin and myself, "we thank you sincerely for your generous intentions; but forgive us if we do not profit by your last bequest. Too fondly linked together by fraternal affection for either of us to wish for dominion over the others, we never can consent to the spinning of the mysterious cord."

Though sensible that her last moments were at hand, Mergian-Banou could not restrain her vexation at this speech.

"Mahomet grant me patience," cried the enchantress, jumping bolt upright in her bed; "was ever mother cursed with three such obstinate blockheads by way of sons! I can tell you, young gentlemen, if my advice is not followed you will repent it sorely; for though while the wheels are in your possession they will guard you against every misfortune, should any one of them ever fall into the hands of——"

Here death broke the thread of her discourse, and our mother lay before us a breathless corse. Fatal accident! had we but heard the conclusion of that sentence, what dreadful calamities should we have escaped! But alas! repining is now of no more use than these reflections!—I proceed with my history.

The first burst of grief being over, Tarif-Eldin and myself urged Caramoussal to accept the mysterious cord. He positively refused; and, as neither of us would even endure

the thoughts of becoming the sovereign of our elder brother, it was unanimously resolved that the cord should not be fabricated at all. We now separated; but not till Caramoussal had given to each of his brothers a small silver hand-bell, the sound of which would summon him to our assistance from the utmost extremity of the globe. To this gift was added a couple of flying tigers; for, as neither Tarif-Eldin nor myself possessed the least necromantic knowledge, without this assistance we should probably have found some little difficulty in travelling into China and Denmark from an island in the Caspian Sea in three quarters of an hour.

"Pardon my interrupting you," said Crystallina at this part of the King of Denmark's story, "but I have heard Feridoun frequently mention the Danish monarch, the Chinese emperor, and Caramoussal, as the three *Genii* of whom alone he was in fear. How comes it, then, that being a Genius, you possess no supernatural powers?"

Because, my fair lady, answered Fortimbrass, our mother being a sorceress in her own right, her sons were all called Genii by courtesy, though in fact none but the eldest had any legal claim to that title; and as to his fears of us, they proceeded from our being in possession of the ebony spinning-wheels, which (as an oracle had forewarned him) were capable of fabricating a talisman superior to all those of which he was master himself.

My first appearance upon a flying tiger had something in it so novel and striking, that my new subjects were instantly prepossessed in my favour, and I was placed upon the throne with universal approbation. Soon after, I espoused Farruknaz, the reigning queen of Bactria, a woman of singular beauty, whose younger sister was already married to the King of Astracan.

In little more than four months after our marriage, the

queen presented me with a daughter. Being somewhat surprised at this circumstance, I consulted several famous physicians, whether they had ever heard of such a case before? They answered, that such an accident was common enough on the *first* time of a wife's lying-in, but desired me to make myself quite easy, for it was never known to happen a second time. This assurance satisfied me completely; and as my daughter had made her appearance in the very spring of my marriage, I determined to call her Sapinella, which (as I need not inform you) in the Danish tongue means Primrose. Her charms have rendered this name famous; but of all the Princes who at the age of fifteen sought the hand of the lovely Sapinella of Jutland, heiress of Denmark and of Bactria, no proposals were so acceptable to me or to herself, as those of the Prince of Ophir. Possibly, fair Moussellina, you are not sufficiently skilled in geography to know the exact situation of that kingdom: permit me, therefore, to explain it to you. At that extremity of the Red Sea which is nearest to the Indies, are situated on one side the confines of Ophir, and on the other extend those of Bactria. The sovereigns of Bactria for time immemorial have been at enmity with those of Ophir: the reason was a very silly one, a case by no means unexampled among neighbours, who like these were only separated by five or six hundred leagues of water. These two potent sovereigns having plagued themselves with wars during upwards of fifteen hundred years, it was at length agreed between the King of Ophir and myself that a final period should be put to them, and a lasting peace cemented by the union of our children.

My daughter was loveliness itself; and the Prince of Ophir was a prodigy of personal charms and mental talents, though hitherto he had been as cold as ice to the fair sex. However, plenipotentiaries having met on both sides, the treaty was

soon concluded. Now it happened that the Bactrian minister, though a great politician, had scarcely an inch of nose; but to make up for it, he had the most enormous mouth that ever was beheld with eyes. The ambassador of Ophir, on the contrary—no! stay a moment, till I recollect myself!—yes—exactly so. It was the ambassador of Ophir, whose mouth was so small, that a child of a year old would have got the tip of its finger into it with difficulty; but then he made amends for it by a nose the most gigantic, and the thickest, studded with warts and pimples, that ever adorned the face of a plenipotentiary.

My ambassador carried the articles of peace and Sapinella's portrait to the court of Ophir; but he might have saved himself the trouble; the Prince would not even look at the picture, and having watched for an opportunity of escaping, fled secretly from court one night, at about three quarters after twelve. But what happened in the interim at the other court will make your hair stand on end with horror. Before I relate this catastrophe, it is necessary to inform you that at the distance of about two stadii and a half from Fourchimena (the Bactrian capital) there was a small wood, extremely dark; that within this wood there was a temple still more gloomy (listen to this with attention, I beseech you); that on the summit of this temple there was a pinnacle, which towered among the clouds; that on the top of this pinnacle there was a cage; and that in this cage there was a certain cock, whose predictions were esteemed as oracles throughout Bactria. Remember these circumstances, if you please, for they are of material consequence.

I was at this period resident myself at Fourchimena. The ambassador of Ophir was not yet arrived, and the whole court was expecting him with the greatest impatience, on account of the splendid fireworks prepared against the

wedding-night. In the meanwhile the lovely Sapinella, who (as a princess ought to be who had received so excellent an education) was extremely partial to handsome, well-made young men, entreated her mother to accompany her privately to the oracle of the cock, in order to ascertain exactly at what hour the Prince of Ophir would arrive; for, trusting to the information of the newspapers, she made no doubt that in order to render the scene more interesting, her lover himself would arrive most gallantly, under the name of the King his father's ambassador. My daughter, therefore, growing weary of being dressed out, frizzed, and perfumed at all hours (as, through fear of being taken by surprise, had been the case during three days and three nights together), was just on the point of slipping out through the stable-door in the twilight, unaccompanied by maids of honour or ladies of the bedchamber, when the Queen was informed that the minister of Ophir was just arrived in a post-chaise.

This proof of amorous impatience confirmed them in the idea that this could be no other than the handsome Prince in person. The chariot which was to have carried them to the oracle, brought them back to the palace. Sapinella (who hoped to reward the Prince for his anxiety to see her, by proving to him that the sight was worth the trouble) did nothing but teach her eyes to languish, bite her lips to make them look red, and pull her hair this way and the other; till at length the audience began. But when the real ambassador appeared, I really thought that she would have fainted. She was so fully persuaded that this was the Prince in disguise, that when, instead of the most lovely countenance in the world, she beheld this pelican's nose hanging over a mouth, which appeared to be made with a gimlet, she exclaimed aloud, and with violence, "that the Prince of Ophir's *mouth* might water, but that the Princess of

Bactria turned up her *nose* at him!" Not contented with this transport of indignation, she sank upon her knees before the whole assembly, and raising her eyes to heaven, "May Mahomet never have mercy upon my sins," she cried, "and may his Alcoran be my poison, if ever I marry the Prince of Ophir, till I become old and hideous enough to inspire him with the same aversion which the sight of him now creates in me." Having said this she kissed the earth, which is looked upon by the Bactrians as the most solemn manner of ratifying a vow.

The poor ambassador, who had not yet commenced his harangue, was extremely astonished at this aversion so openly avowed towards the most charming Prince in the universe. He pocketed the golden trumpet which he was going to insert in his mouth in order to render his compliments audible, and quitted the audience-chamber in the same manner that he had entered it; but he ascended his post-chaise in such a storm of rage, that we all thought his nose would never get out of the city without setting it in flames, it appeared so red and fiery! On the other hand, the Princess tore herself from the encircling arms of her father, gave a sound box on the ear to her governess, who was in vain endeavouring to pacify her, sprang upon the horse of one of the officers of the guard, and away she galloped astride to the oracle of the miraculous cock. On reaching the wood she descended, and was on the point of entering the temple, when by the glimmerings of the moonbeams she perceived a youth in bright armour seated at the foot of a lofty cedar, to which his courser was bound.

I need not explain that this stranger was the Prince of Ophir, whom (while flying from his father's court) chance had guided to the oraculous wood; neither need I mention that Sapinella instantly fell in love with him to distraction.

"Gallant stranger," said she in a gentle voice, while her

blushes made her cover her face with her fan, though she made no scruple of peeping at the Prince through an oval hole in the handle of it, "gallant stranger, pardon the intrusion of an unknown! you behold in me the unfortunate Princess of Bactria, who——"

"Of Bactria!" exclaimed the Prince of Ophir, starting back in dismay. That name recalled to him all the horrors of matrimony! Already he fancied himself married, already heard Sapinella called bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh; and, unable to resist the impulse of his feelings, he sprang upon his horse, stuck his spurs into the animal's sides, and without saying adieu to my daughter, he soon left the oraculous wood a full league behind him.

Sapinella was not a little surprised at this abrupt departure. She gazed after him with her mouth wide open, nor had she succeeded in closing it, when the giant Feridoun stood before her. Happening to have some business with the miraculous cock that evening, he entered the wood just as the Prince of Ophir left it. No sooner did he see my daughter than he loved her, and no sooner did he love her than he told her so: but he had chosen a most unpropitious moment for making his addresses. She not only rejected them positively, but assured him that he was the most horrible creature she had ever seen, and that if he would come to the capital he might easily make a fortune by exhibiting himself as a monster. At the conclusion of this civil speech, she vaulted into her saddle without staying to consult the oracle, snapped her fingers at the Genius, in token of contempt, then gave her horse a kick, and gallopped home again as hard as she gallopped away.

Incensed at this behaviour, Feridoun had recourse to his spells: but when he found that they had no effect upon the fugitive, it struck him that she must certainly be under the protection of one of the three magic spinning-wheels, of which

he had so long been in search. It was to preserve us from the malevolence of this very sorcerer, that our mother had advised our spinning the mysterious cord, which would render the power of the possessor superior to his, and would enable us to bind this formidable enemy hand and foot, whenever he should render himself obnoxious. We had neglected Mergian-Banou's prudent counsels, and (though it was then unknown to me) one member of our family had already experienced the fatal effects of our disobedience.

Feridoun had, it seems, taken a fancy to be Emperor of China, and invaded that kingdom at a time when grief for the recent loss of his wife rendered Tarif-Eldin the less able to repel the attack. However, conscious that though the loss of his wife was a bad thing, the loss of his empire would be a still worse, he exerted his military talents with such effect as to defeat the invaders; and as the spinning-wheel protected him from all supernatural enemies, Feridoun was obliged to regain the crystal island without having accomplished his object. On reaching his home, his first care was to consult his books as to the cause which rendered his most powerful spells without effect when exercised upon the Emperor of China. He now learned for the first time that there existed three spinning-wheels, once the property of the pre-adamite Sultanas; that each of these sufficed to protect not only its owner, but his family, from every species of enchantment; and that if they were collected and placed in the hands of the three most beautiful princesses in the world, they would fabricate a cord, which would make its possessor sovereign lord over all the Genii and sorcerers in existence, whether good, bad, or indifferent.

This intelligence made Feridoun set all his wits to work. The talismans in question (he well knew) could not be taken by force, nor could he become master of them except through

a woman's hands. To a woman, then, he applied himself, and caused your merry mother, fair Moussellina, to stop at Pekin, in her road to her husband's dominions. Here, under the disguise of a dervish, he took care to explain to her the importance of the ebony spinning-wheel, and expatiated upon its virtues, till her desire to possess it became extreme. Tarif-Eldin was still sorrowing in widowhood; but the Queen of Astracan soothed him and consoled him so comically, that in less than a week she had completely laughed his wife out of his heart, and herself into it. No sooner did she find him entirely in her power than she fixed the price of her favours at the surrender of the spinning-wheel; though she was too much a woman of honour to intend to keep her word. My brother was infatuated; the wheel was given into her hands, and that very night the Queen departed privately from Pekin, carrying with her the palladium of Tarif-Eldin's happiness. He soon felt the fatal effects of his imprudence. Feridoun again invaded China, and with such success, that scarcely could a faithful courtier escape with my brother's two young sons, both of them still in the cradle.

Soon wearied of his conquest, Feridoun shortly after returned to the crystal island; but he was not so soon weary of tormenting the unfortunate Emperor, whom he had transformed into an enormous cock, frequently amusing himself by making him fight matches against animals of the same species, and sometimes setting him up to be thrown at by little boys at an asper a-piece. At length even these amusements lost their relish, and one day he had actually ordered him to be fricassed for dinner; when my feathered relation perceived the magic hand-bell given to him by Caramoussal, which till then he had totally forgotten, and which the Genius (ignorant of its use) had brought with him to the island among other spoils, for the sake of the silver.

Tarif-Eldin seized it with eagerness, and the very first tingle brought Caramoussal to his assistance.

The Enchanter's threats and expostulations induced Feridoun to spare the life of the human cock; but it was only upon condition that he should act the part of the Bactrian oracle during a certain number of years, at the expiration of which term he should be delivered into the hands of Caramoussal. Accordingly, the Emperor was inclosed within the cage of the pinnacle, and compelled occasionally to deliver such oracles as the Genius (who frequently officiated as priestess himself) thought proper to suggest.

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"But wherefore," said Moussellina, "did Feridoun suffer my mother to retain possession of the spinning-wheel? For in her possession it still was when she died. Her principal confidante then gave me the key of the closet which contained it, accompanied by my mother's dying injunction not to unlock the door: an injunction which I never disobeyed till after the loss of a certain part of my dress, which shall be nameless."

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"To take it from her by force," replied Fortimbrass, "was impracticable; but Feridoun certainly expected the Queen to give it him with her own free will. However, when he demanded it, her majesty, your mother (who knew well the value of the wheel, and who loved a joke better than custard) thought that it would be an excellent jest to outwit the Genius, and therefore assured him (at the same time laughing heartily) that she intended to keep it herself. This promise she adhered to more faithfully than her former ones, as indeed was natural; for it certainly is infinitely more difficult to keep

a promise which we make to please other people than one which we make to please ourselves. Feridoun, however, took this joke so ill, that he vowed to make your mother laugh on the wrong side of her mouth; but as the talisman effectually secured her from his resentment, he resolved that you at least should not jest so out of season, and accordingly endowed you at your birth with that immovable gravity, which nothing but the effect of his own enchantments can dispel.—So much for the history of my brother: I now resume my own."

On Sapinella's return home, she expatiated upon the beauty of the unknown youth, and painted the giant's appearance and menaces in the most terrific colours. My poor wife was so much alarmed that she was actually going to swoon, but on second thoughts put it off till a more convenient season. Every female in the palace joined her in beseeching me to take all possible measures for preserving them from this terrible giant, declaring one and all, that they expected to be murdered or worse before the next morning: at all events, they should never be able to sleep quietly in their beds for thinking of the giant, that was absolutely certain! Farruknaz, indeed, who was a most virtuous personage, and held her honour far more precious than her life, dwelt more particularly on Feridoun's enormous stature, and hinted that all the female chastity, both in Denmark and Bactria, would be endangered by an enemy ten yards high. For my own part, I was persuaded that the talisman (whose mysterious virtue I had prudently concealed from every one) was a full security against the attacks of our unknown foe: however, to satisfy the women, I ordered the palace-guard to be doubled, and soon after removed my court to the capital of Denmark.

Some weeks passed away in such tranquillity that we not only hoped that Feridoun had forgotten *us*, but at last we actually

forgot *him*. In the meanwhile, Sapinella had spared no pains to obtain some tidings of the unknown possessor of her heart. She described his person accurately in the royal Copenhagen Gazette, and offered five hundred sequins reward to any who would tell her where to find him. All her exertions were in vain; and she began to despair of ever discovering him, when one evening while she was wandering in the palace gardens, she suddenly felt something seize her by the foot. She looked down, and perceived an enormous toad (a reptile to which she had always a particular aversion) gnawing the toe of her slipper. She uttered a loud scream, hastily drew her foot out of its covering, and instantly the toad and the slipper disappeared together. As soon as the beautiful Sapinella recovered from her alarm, she hobbled back to her chamber, and called for another pair of shoes: but, oh! grief of griefs! none could be found that would fit her. In vain did we ransack every shop in Copenhagen: one pair was too large, and another was too small: *this* made her walk as if she had a wooden leg, and *that* in a few minutes produced corns as big as pumpkins! All were at a loss to account for so strange a circumstance, but no one doubted that Feridoun had a finger in the business: such indeed was the fact, for Caramoussal some time after explained the matter as follows. It seems that it was a condition (though unknown to my brothers and myself) annexed to the possession of our spinning-wheels, that the children of those in whose custody they were kept, should each have some personal perfection, so exquisite as actually to become a defect; and such was the case with my daughter's foot; with your skin, adorable Moussellina, and with the respective noses of the two Princes of China. It was also decreed that no cloth should be suffered to touch that particular part without causing extreme pain, except the first piece which should be applied to it. Thus it was, my fair

niece, that *you* could only wear one particular shift; that Sapinella could only be fitted with one particular pair of slippers; and that my Chinese nephews could only blow their noses with one particular pocket-handkerchief. I must not, however, omit to mention, that these several articles had the peculiar property of never wearing out, or of requiring washing.

Feridoun discovered this circumstance, and resolved to deprive Sapinella of her slipper. This accomplished, and my daughter thrown into the greatest perplexity, he next assumed the form of my prime minister, and assured my too credulous Queen that the sandal-wood chest which I kept locked so carefully, contained a remedy for her darling's distress. Nay, so artfully did he work upon her maternal feelings, that at length she broke open the mysterious chest. First, she drew forth the ebony spinning-wheel: not conceiving how this machine could possibly supply her with slippers for Sapinella, she proceeded to search deeper, and in the meanwhile requested her adviser to be so obliging as to hold the talisman for a moment. Ah! how willingly the traitor complied! No sooner was it in his hands, than he resumed his natural form. Farruknaz screamed with terror and surprise; I heard the cry, and hastening with my daughter to her assistance, beheld for the first time my colossal enemy.

"King of Denmark," said he, "listen with attention to my commands. This talisman was stolen from my father by Mergian-Banou: justly should I punish you for having detained from me so long my paternal inheritance; but in consideration of the passion with which your daughter has inspired me, your offence shall be pardoned, and my enmity converted into friendship, provided the fair Sapinella consents to become my bride."

The poor Princess was frightened out of her little wits at

this proposal: but my wife, who had a natural turn for satire, and was highly incensed at having been over-reached, thought proper to indulge her propensity at the giant's expense. This she did with such success, and rendered Feridoun so irresistibly ludicrous, that in spite of my vexation I laughed till I was ready to expire. This was highly imprudent in both of us, for the giant could no more command his temper than I could my muscles, or the Queen her tongue; and suddenly lifting up his left leg, he without any ceremony made — (you need not put up your fans, ladies,)—he suddenly made a nail as big as a scimitar issue from his great toe, with which tremendous instrument, when I was in the very midst of a horse-laugh, he gave my mouth such a slicer, that he slit it completely from ear to ear: then grasping my wife by the nape of her neck, he rose with her into the air; where, horrible to tell! we saw him with his enormous nail cut her up as dexterously as the most expert butcher could have done a calf. This done, he hurled her limbs to different quarters of the globe, a leg one way, and an arm another; while the blood flowed from them in such quantities, that it tinged the waters on which it fell, and has caused that part of the ocean to be called ever since by the name of the Red Sea.

This horrible scene performed, the Genius re-descended to inform us that he would return on that day twelvemonth; when, if my daughter still refused his hand, he would inflict on us the most exemplary punishment. He added, that to teach me better manners than to laugh at people before their faces, my mouth should never return to its original size, till I had found another of the same dimensions; and having said this, he disappeared with the fatal spinning-wheel.

For some time I could do nothing but lament my wife,

who had not a single fault in her whole composition, except having a passion for satire and a pair of bandy legs. (At this remark from the King, the white arms were observed to turn the wheel with incredible velocity; but Fortimbrass did not notice this circumstance. He proceeded):—When my grief was somewhat abated, I hastened in search of the silver bell, which would summon Caramoussal to my assistance, and which till then I had neglected. What was my despair at learning that the Queen, being ignorant of its secret qualities, and thinking it old-fashioned, had caused it to be melted down, and converted into a butter-boat for her own use! I was near losing my senses at this discovery; and Sapinella really lost hers, not only through fear of the Genius, but from pain at walking unshod with feet so delicate. The shoemakers endeavoured in vain to fit her; and as at first I ascribed their failure to their awkwardness, in a moment of passion I happened to hang two or three of the poor devils, for which, however, I was afterwards very sorry. At length I judged it best to publish in every foreign kingdom as well as my own, that whoever could produce a shoe that would fit Sapinella, or a mouth as large as my own, should espouse the Princess, and be heir to my dominions. These ambassadors were ordered, on pain of death, never again to set foot in Denmark, till they had succeeded in their search: while, on the other hand, a messenger, whom I despatched to Caramoussal's residence on Mount Atlas, was commanded to return with all possible speed.

He was but just in time: a single day only was wanting to complete the year, when Caramoussal arrived. Before I had time to request it, he promised me his protection, at the same time assuring me, that till my messenger's arrival he had been ignorant of my distress, having trusted to my ringing the silver bell. He also comforted me with the

prospect of ultimate happiness and tranquillity; but added, that for the present he could not prevent Feridoun from inflicting the most cruel calamities both upon myself and my daughter. He likęwise made known to me Tarif-Eldin's adventures, whose servitude to the Genius was at length expired, and whom he had just left upon Mount Atlas. He concluded by lamenting the increase of Feridoun's power, who had obtained possession of another spinning-wheel by practising the same artifice by which he had deprived Sapinella of her slipper, upon the Princess of Astracan, who had lately been robbed of her single shift.

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"Alas! he told you but too true!" exclaimed Moussellina, in this part of her uncle's narrative; "assuming the form of my nurse, he persuaded me that he could easily spin me a proper piece of cambric, provided he were furnished with the ebony wheel, so carefully locked up in my mother's closet. I gave it into his hands, and he vanished with it instantly. This it was which, upon hearing of the arrival of Feridoun's wife, put it into my head that she might possibly have got my shift; and I made bold to take up the corner of hers, in order to examine the mark, for which liberty I beg her ten thousand pardons."

Crystallina received this apology very graciously, but requested the Princess to suffer Fortimbrass to proceed with his history, being extremely curious to hear its conclusion. I now began to suspect that I was spinning a shift for the lovely Moussellina; and feeling for the awkwardness of her highness's situation, I redoubled my diligence, while Fortimbrass proceeded as follows:—

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Caramoussal now summoned my daughter. Great was her surprise and grief at learning that the handsome stranger

was no other than the Prince of Ophir, and at being reminded of her imprudent oath. The Enchanter also took this opportunity of reading her a lecture upon swearing, assuring her that no oaths were proper in a young lady's mouth stronger than "Bless my heart!" "Ods-fish!" or at most, "By the living jingo!" He was still holding forth upon this topic when the Genius arrived.

Greatly was he displeased at Caramoussal's presence, whose skill in astrology and possession of the third talisman rendered him a formidable antagonist. My brother perceived, and made use of his confusion to bring him to some reasonable treaty, and after much parley the following conditions were settled between the Enchanters: Sapinella was doomed to reside upon Mount Atlas, under a form the most frightful, till some Prince of the name of Facardin should arrive there, and either accept her hand at first sight, or devour Feridoun's left leg raw, before the Genius was able to prevent him; but if no such event took place during twenty years, she was then to become Feridoun's undisputed property. My sentence was to wear the form of some animal, and the only indulgence granted me was the choice what particular animal it should be. It was, however, stipulated by Caramoussal, that if by any means I could manage to draw blood from my enemy, I should instantly resume my natural shape. With regard to Tarif-Eldin, it was enacted that he should never leave off crowing till a cock could be found, whose powers of flying were as extraordinary as those with which the Genius (in order to enlarge the sphere of his amusements) had endowed the unfortunate Emperor. On the other hand, Feridoun was allowed free admission to Caramoussal's grotto, in order that he might entertain no doubts of Sapinella's performing strictly the articles of the treaty; but so far

was he from being permitted to take any advantage of these interviews, that he was even forbidden to press the tip of her little finger. These conditions being agreed to, the giant disappeared, to our very great satisfaction.

As a clause in the treaty forbade my residing with my daughter, my brother advised my taking up my abode in the isle of lions, under the form of one of those animals. This island being close to Mount Atlas, I could then receive the earliest intelligence of any change in my daughter's situation; and he promised that she should meet me at the mountain's foot every evening, when, during a full hour, she should enjoy her natural shape. He next comforted my daughter with the assurance that the twenty years of enchantment should not be reckoned in her life, and that when the charm should be dissolved she should still find herself in all the bloom and beauty of sixteen. Then taking an affectionate farewell, he transported her to the top of Mount Atlas, and I immediately found myself upon all fours in the isle of lions.

Every evening I swam to the opposite shore, where Caramoussal failed not to conduct my daughter and the imperial cock. In these visits I learned many particulars of which I was till then ignorant. It seems Caramoussal's books had taught him that the bending of the famous bow of Ulysses would ascertain the person destined to disenchant my daughter. This was also no secret to Feridoun; but fortunately the bow was already in my brother's possession. Caramoussal also informed me that he daily expected a prince to arrive at Mount Atlas, on whom he placed his strongest hopes of reversing Feridoun's spells; and that though my unhappy Queen had, it is true, been chopped in pieces, yet consideration for his future mother-in-law had induced Feridoun to preserve her in existence. He should,

therefore, immediately dispatch an emissary to collect her scattered but still animated limbs, and he doubted not his being able to stitch them together again so cleverly with a needle and thread, that the nicest eye should be unable to detect the deception. Her hands and arms (he had the pleasure to assure me) were already in his possession; and, as she was extremely proud of their beauty, he had gratified her innocent vanity by cutting two holes in the door of his grotto, through which she never failed to pass her arms on the arrival of any stranger. She generally affected to be turning the handle of the spinning-wheel; and by this device she contrived to secure the stranger's admiration of her alabaster hands, without being mortified by his discovering that the rest of her person was running wild about the universe. Accordingly, she frequently profited by this amusement; and Sapinella, having no better means of passing her time, occasionally beguiled her *ennui* by the same occupation. These conversations lasted during an hour; after which Sapinella regained the summit of Mount Atlas, while I swam back to the isle of lions.

Near a year elapsed, and, though many persons had attempted it, the bow of Ulysses remained unbent. At length the day arrived when the annual hunting-match was accustomed to take place. You must undoubtedly have heard of this singular festival, whose novelty excited in me no small degree of expectation: and I was pleased with the opportunity of ascertaining whether animals on four legs receive as much pleasure from being hunted as animals upon two legs receive from hunting them,—a point which had always appeared to me somewhat questionable. On the appointed morning I failed not to be at the sea-shore, where about seven hundred of my companions were already assembled. As I was evidently a stranger, they very politely

insisted on my taking the command, and would not hear of a refusal, though I protested that I should be perfectly contented with a cornetcy, or at most with a troop. But I soon found that in heading such forces but little honour could be gained: no sooner was a cock heard to crow than they fled in confusion, fell into the nets of the hunters, and I soon saw eleven landed on the opposite shore.

One was still wanting to complete the usual number. Heaven and earth! how great was my joy when I recognised in the warrior who remained after his companions, for the purpose of taking the twelfth lion, the very person who (as Caramoussal had assured me) was most likely to effect my daughter's deliverance. I flew to meet him, intending to discover myself, and request him to proceed to Mount Atlas without a moment's delay. But my kind intentions were frustrated. Seeing me run towards him open-mouthed, he very naturally concluded that I meant to make a dinner of him; and under this persuasion he attacked me so furiously, that I was obliged to return his blows in my own defence. Still I endeavoured to make him aware of his mistake; but the cock kept crowing so loud, and his female companion exerted her lungs so successfully, that the knight could not possibly hear a word that I said to him. At length, being quite out of patience, I just gave him a scratch, which (I thought) would disable him from fighting for the present; and, in order to stop the noise a little, I made bold to swallow the cock at a mouthful. I then returned to my antagonist; but, without attending to the signs by which I strove to express that I had something to say to him, he very uncivilly chopped off my left paw. Anguish deprived me of my senses, and I had only time to pronounce his name before I fainted away. During my swoon Caramoussal (who, to do him justice, never discovered

any danger till it was too late to prevent it) conveyed me to his grotto, fixed on my severed hand with an excellent salve of our mother's own composition, and I had the satisfaction of seeing it once more united to my arm. However, I long felt the effects of the wound, and (as you see) I am still obliged to carry my arm in a sling.

While loss of blood still confined me to my bed, Facardin, Prince of Ophir, arrived at the grotto, bent the bow of Ulysses, and finding my daughter in her horrible metamorphosis, he positively rejected the offer of her hand. He also despised her advice, not to drink from a certain enchanted fountain; the consequence was, that his heart immediately became inflammable at the sight of every female; while, on the other hand, so singular a change took place in his person, as in the eyes of every female rendered him unavoidably an object of ridicule and disgust. Very different, therefore, were the impressions produced upon them by a second interview. Sapinella had resumed her original form, and the Prince was struck with admiration at her beauty; while she, on the other hand, could only look upon him with the most violent aversion. Aware, however, that on him depended her strongest hopes of deliverance, and also that, during their temporary separation, he had vanquished Feridoun in single combat, and had actually cut off the fatal leg, she endeavoured to soften the severity of her countenance, and encouraged her lover with smiles to persevere in the adventure. The leg was served up to him; he was persuaded to begin upon it; he had already swallowed several slices, and all was going on in the most prosperous manner imaginable, when Sapinella felt that her single hour of beauty was elapsed. Shocked at the thought of being recognised for the woman whose deformity had already excited in him such strong sentiments of disgust,

she thought it best to make her escape before the transformation could take place, and leave the Prince to finish his nauseous meal by himself. Most unfortunate were the consequences of her ill-timed vanity. Seeing her run away, the Prince thought proper to run after her; Feridoun seized his mysterious leg, clapped it on again, and with it resumed all his former power. He then raised a whirlwind, which rolled Facardin from the top of the mountain to the bottom, and thus concluded an adventure on which we had so long grounded our strongest expectations.

They say, and very truly, that misfortunes never come single. It was soon discovered that, during the confusion occasioned by the Prince of Ophir's visit, our enemy had contrived to carry off the Ulyssean bow. This loss almost deprived the poor Astronomer of the little wits which Heaven had vouchsafed to grant him. This weapon was absolutely necessary for Sapinella's deliverance, and to recover it at any rate was an indispensable duty. Fortunately, the Prince of Fez (to whom Feridoun intrusted it, thinking my brother less likely to discover the place of its concealment when in the possession of a stranger, than to regain it while under his own care) disobeyed the command of never unlocking the chest in which it was deposited. It was opened. As luck would have it, the imperial cock (whom Caramoussal had despatched in search of the bow) was at that moment hovering over the palace-gardens of Serendip. Instantly, he darted down, carried off the bow, and it is the very same which you now see in my possession.

No sooner was I recovered from my wound, than Feridoun insisted upon my recommencing as a beast, and out of pure spite and ill-nature transported me to that part of the globe which is at the greatest distance from Mount Atlas. Most gladly would I have returned thither; but I was ignorant of the

way, and had no book of the roads. My joy, therefore, was boundless when the King of Astracan happened to send me under the form of an ourang-outang, in common with many others of my species, as a present to Caramoussal. Feridoun's spells had prevented that enchanter from knowing what was become of me. He could only discover, that after alternately assuming the appearances of an hippopotamus, an armadillo, and a tortoiseshell cat, I had at length determined upon remaining a monkey for the rest of my bestial existence; in consequence of which, he gave all who wished to consult him to understand that a present of those animals would be the most certain means of conciliating his protection; and he trusted that I should, one day or other, be included in the number of those transmitted to him.

That confidence at length proved well-founded; I reached the grotto, and with some difficulty Feridoun was prevailed upon to permit my residing upon Mount Atlas, as also to resume my original form during the whole day; it was that on which the ambassadors from Astracan had their audience of Caramoussal. They had been very polite to me on the road; and I was fortunate enough to return their civilities on their way back again, by rescuing them from two or three hundred lions (I forget the exact number) who had the impertinence to make a party to breakfast upon the ill-fated ambassadors: but the lions soon found that there went two words to that bargain. Aware of their intention, my brother despatched me to the scene of action, and being armed with the Ulyssean bow (which, since the Prince of Ophir's success, required no great strength to use) I easily defeated the assailants, and rescued my friends.

My time on Mount Atlas passed very quietly and very dully till the other morning, when my brother accosted me with a joyful countenance.

"I have at length," said he, "discovered a remedy for all our misfortunes. Hasten to the Princess of Astracan; with her you will find Feridoun, under the form of a matron. While he is off his guard, take an opportunity to draw blood from him, and your original shape will be immediately restored. Leave Sapinella's destiny to my care; the emperor will immediately transport you into Moussellina's presence; mount him, and away!"

I obeyed; Sapinella obtained permission to accompany me hither for the sake of a little air and exercise. Of what followed, my dear niece, you have been an eye-witness; nor will you be surprised at the emotion produced in my bosom on beholding these beautiful white arms, when I mention that I doubt not their having formerly been the property of my beloved and imprudent consort.

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With another flood of tears, Fortimbrass here concluded his affecting narrative. The evening being far advanced, the Princess gave over work. Instantly the beautiful arms disappeared with the third spinning-wheel; the first two were again committed to my custody. Fortimbrass embraced his niece; she curtsied, we bowed, and the assembly broke up in good order.

For my part, I followed the brother Facardins to their apartment, expecting to be as agreeably entertained with the history of the second as I had been with that of the first. Great, therefore, was my disappointment, when on my requesting him to relate his adventures, he assured me, that except those in the crystal island, he had never met with anything extraordinary in the whole course of his life.

"What!" cried I, "have you really reached the age of one-and-twenty without having once been turned into a blue bear or a china teapot? Are you really unlucky enough

never to have seen so much as a single kingdom transformed into a fish-pond? never to have destroyed a single black giant or fiery dragon, nor rescued from some sorcerer's den two or three dozen of bewitched queens and metamorphosed princesses? The most extraordinary thing that I ever heard of! Why, what can you have been doing all this time?"

"Just what other people do," answered he; "I ate and drank a good deal, made love occasionally, said little, thought less, and yawned immoderately. I was educated in Cappadocia; it is a damned stupid country: the King of it was my guardian; he was a damned stupid old fellow. I thought books a bore, and regularly played truant; my tutor as regularly chastised me, and I thought flogging a greater bore than books. I set out on my travels, bought an easy palanquin, and made the tour of Asia with my eyes shut. I next prepared to pay Africa a similar visit. I embarked on board a felucca; my hammock was a very good one, and I slept there very comfortably. Unluckily, a violent storm woke me from a sound nap; I yawned, rubbed my eyes, and was drowned; I thought this the greatest bore of all. The rest you know; and I shall only add, that Moussellina has made an impression on my heart so forcible, that——"

He accompanied his love confession with so hearty a yawn, that it produced an instantaneous drowsiness upon his hearers. We parted for the night, and scarcely had I thrown myself on my couch, before I fell into a profound slumber: I was not long permitted to enjoy it.

Midnight was already past. The day appointed for the laughing contest; that day, so long, so earnestly expected; that day, pregnant with Moussellina's fate and with the conclusion of so many wonderful events; that day was now already an hour old.

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"I am glad of it, with all my heart and soul," cried Schahriar, rubbing his hands; "now, then, we shall hear whether the Queen of Denmark got tacked together again; who succeeded in killing the crocodile, and making the Princess laugh; what became of the monkey and his daughter; and how Moussellina almost jumped out of her skin, for joy at getting a shift next to it. Tell away, my good friend! I die to know what happened on that important morning."

"Since your Majesty," resumed Trebizonde, "is so anxious to know the whole affair, I hasten to inform you without losing a moment, that I am quite ignorant of every particular."

"The devil you are!" exclaimed the Sultan, jumping bolt upright in his bed.

"It is but too true!" rejoined Facardin; "an extraordinary accident on that very morning compelled me to quit the tents of Astracan."

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Your Majesty may remember, that in order to possess the spinning-wheels, it was necessary to obtain them voluntarily from some female hand. To regain these treasures, Feridoun had craftily enough addressed himself to Crystallina. Perceiving that her passion for the tall Facardin (for thus is he best distinguished) had revived, he promised to make her Empress of China, and (waiving his own claim to her hand) to unite her to the object of her choice, provided she would steal the talismans from my charge, and put them once more in his power. To make this proposal was his motive for visiting Moussellina's tent that evening. Crystallina had observed with much displeasure the glances which passed between the Princess and her former admirer. Love, jealousy, revenge, and, above all, curiosity to know whether

Facardin was much changed since their parting,—all these motives made her eagerly embrace Feridoun's offers.

Accordingly, during my absence she concealed herself in my chamber; and scarcely was I asleep before the wheels were in her possession. Now then her business was to leave the tent as quickly as possible; but she could not resist her curiosity to know whether I usually slept upon my back or on one side. For this purpose she deposited the talismans on the ground, took the night-lamp, and softly approached my couch. As she leaned over me, a drop of burning oil fell on my shoulder. A cry of pain convinced the intruder that I was disturbed; and, hastily dropping the lamp, she caught up the spinning-wheels, and fled from the chamber. She fled not unpursued; the importance of my loss flashed upon my mind instantly; I started from my couch, and followed her——

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"Without dressing yourself?" exclaimed Dinarzade; "oh! monstrous! No wonder that Crystallina ran away; in such a situation I should have out-stripped the winds in swiftness, nor would ever have forgiven you for not staying at least to slip on a bed-gown."

"Fair Dinarzade," replied the Prince, smiling, "your extreme delicacy has taken the alarm without reason. I certainly was not in full dress; still my appearance was by no means so terrible as your lively fancy pictures it, as from infancy I have been accustomed to sleep in a waistcoat and drawers of rose-coloured taffeta."

"And a very silly custom too!" observed Dinarzade pettishly.

"I had very strong reasons for adopting it," answered Facardin, "but which I cannot explain to you at present. Perhaps a time may come when——"

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But I proceed with my story, which now approaches its conclusion. I pursued the thief so swiftly, that I overtook her at the entrance of the tent; there Feridoun was waiting for her; but before she could deliver the talismans into his hands, I fortunately seized and pulled her back again by the tail of her shift. To obtain the wheels from her against her consent I well knew to be impossible. All that I could do was to prevent her giving them to the Genius; this I for some time effected, by contriving, whenever he put himself in her way, to whisk her suddenly round to the other side, till Feridoun, losing all patience, muttered a few unintelligible words, and, twisting his hand in Crystallina's long tresses (which a gust of wind happened to bring within his reach), he sprang with her into the air; and as I persisted in detaining her by the aforesaid cambric, away we all three flew together, to the infinite surprise and terror of a numerous audience, attracted by the noise of our dispute.

Crystallina screamed so loud, that it was quite a wonder; nor was *I* by any means pleased to find myself hanging in mid-air by so ticklish a dependence as the tail of a lady's shift. However, I did not retain this situation long. The Genius, having as little taste for my society as I had for his, drew a large pair of shears from his girdle, snipped off the piece of linen by which I was holding, and restored me to the earth with the greatest possible expedition. Down I came, tumbling head over heels; but long before I reached terra firma, I had completely lost my senses.

On their return, I was not a little surprised to find myself on a sofa in my own palace at Trebizonde. A venerable man was standing near me, in whom I instantly recognised the admirable Caramoussal.

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"Recognised him?" repeated the Sultan; "why, had you ever seen him before?"

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Frequently, answered Facardin; but having been enjoined by him never to reveal what had passed between us, in this narrative of my adventures I have carefully avoided touching upon those which relate to the Enchanter. Suffice it to say, that I was not surprised to hear that I was indebted to his care for my late escape from destruction. He also informed me that he had at length discovered the only certain means for concluding the misfortunes of his family, and he gave me full instructions as to the part which I was destined to perform. In the execution of it I have been engaged ever since. Our plot succeeds. Feridoun is our dupe completely; his power will soon be at an end, and I shall then relate to your Majesty by what means Caramoussal has attained his object. At present you must excuse my not saying a syllable more upon the subject, and I have now the honour to leave you at the end of my story, as much in the dark as you were at the beginning.

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The Prince was silent; surprise at the abrupt conclusion of his history for some moments compelled his hearers to follow his example, but Schahriar at length recovered himself.

"And so," said he, in an angry voice, "and so you really mean to leave your story unfinished? Now, my worthy friend, have the goodness to listen to *me* for a few moments. If you don't instantly and on the spot relate every tittle that has passed between you and that old he-witch Caramoussal, as I'm a sultan and a sinner, I'll treat you no better than if you were my wife! and if you refuse to conclude your adventures yourself, never may I speak again, if I don't do it for you with two yards and a half of whip-cord: now that's

flat!" and at the same time clapping his hands, he called the guard of black eunuchs into the chamber.

"Though your threats cannot alarm me," replied the Prince, "my anxiety to gratify your Majesty induces me to relate every circumstance which I can possibly disclose with safety. Know then, that since my return to your Majesty's dominions, no sooner does the clock point to midnight than —hark! it strikes at this moment!"—and at the same instant a loud burst of thunder shook the room, a bright flame enveloped Facardin, and he instantly vanished from the eyes of the astonished spectators.

Before they were perfectly recovered from their surprise at this unexpected incident, the door of the royal apartment was suddenly thrown open, and the Lord Chamberlain entering in the greatest hurry and confusion, put the following letter into the Sultan's hands:—

"Caramoussal, Lord of Mount Atlas, presents his best compliments to the Sultan and Sultana of the Indies, and informs them, that if not inconvenient, the King and Queen of Denmark, the Kings of Astracan and Ophir, Zemin, Prince of Fez, and the Emperor of China with his two sons, intend having the honour of breakfasting with their sublime Majesties."

Great was the joy of Schahriar and the two beautiful sisters at this promised visit of such illustrious and extraordinary personages. They were expected every moment, and therefore no time was to be lost in preparing for their reception. The news spread through the palace like wild-fire, and never was there such an uproar known in it since the peculiar taste of the first Sultana was discovered. In five minutes all was noise, and bustle, and confusion; everybody was conscious that on this important occasion a great deal was to be done and everybody had so much to do that nobody did anything

Servants ran here and there, backwards and forwards, without knowing of what they were in search; lords and ladies were seen flying about in all directions, some full-dressed, some half-dressed, some not dressed at all; whoever wanted one thing was sure to get another; Scherazade asked for a wash-ball, and they brought her a chaffing-dish of charcoal; and when the Grand Vizier called for his court-going slippers, they crammed his mouth with a buttered muffin.

In spite of all these accidents, the royal family made so much expedition that they were ready before the sentinels (who were stationed on the loftiest towers) announced the approach of a numerous and brilliant cavalcade. Soon after, the expected guests entered the palace, and were received in a manner suitable to their distinguished rank. After many compliments had passed on both sides, than which nothing could be more polite or less to the purpose, the whole company partook of an entertainment truly magnificent, and served up in the very best taste. Dinarzade paid particular attention to the appearance of the Queen of Denmark: her beauty she could not question; but she whispered her sister—"that the poor woman had been very clumsily sewed together, and that she plainly discovered a seam, where the tailor had stitched her nose on." She also occasionally touched upon the subject of crooked legs, at the same time taking care to convince the company that her own were straight; nor could all Scherazade's frowns prevent her from declaring aloud, that "long petticoats were like charity, and frequently covered a multitude of defects." Luckily, the Queen of Denmark was too well pleased at finding herself all of a piece again to suffer these hints to ruffle her temper, and the repast was finished in undisturbed harmony.

And now it was that Schahriar requested to be informed to what occasion he was indebted for the honour of this visit,

and what adventures had taken place since the Prince of Trebizonde's departure from the tents of Astracan. Great was his surprise and pleasure when Fortimbrass assured him that the Princes of China were no other than the brother Facardins of whom he had already heard so much; and Facardin of the Grotto being unanimously requested to satisfy the Sultan's curiosity, he readily complied, and commenced as follows:—

CONTINUATION OF THE HISTORY OF FACARDIN OF THE GROTTO

It is needless to inform you (and therefore, following the example of the best historians, I shall not fail to relate it) that the sudden elopement of Trebizonde and his fair companion occasioned no slight surprise and sorrow. As for Moussellina, she was inconsolable for the loss of her spinning-wheel, and became more grave than ever, which was a great discouragement to her illustrious admirers. My brother and myself did our best to comfort the Princess, to whom we were presented next day as relations by our good uncle, the King of Denmark.

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"The King your uncle?" interrupted Schahriar; "oh! ay! very true! But pray, my dear sir, how did you find out this connexion?"

"By my nose," answered Facardin of the Grotto.

"Your nose!" repeated the astonished Sultan: "what, then, did you know your uncle by his smell? Or perhaps you only mean, that you smelt out the secret?"

. . . . . .

By no means, said Facardin; the fact is, that the secret lay hid in my pocket-handkerchief. Caramoussal informs me that you have heard from the Prince of Trebizonde

all that passed in the tents of Astracan previous to that Prince's departure. Doubtless, you must remember that Fortimbrass mentioned in his history that his nephews, the two Princes of China, had their noses formed of so delicate a texture as only to permit their using a particular pocket-handkerchief. The truth flashed upon me the very first time that I blew my nose after hearing this remark; and my brother's nostrils proving to be endowed with a similar sensibility, we boldly claimed kindred with Fortimbrass on the succeeding day. He heard us with attention, recognised our pocket-handkerchiefs to have once been his mother's (indeed, they were still marked with an M. B. at the corners), and instantly acknowledged us for his nephews in the most gracious manner possible.

The hour appointed for the merry contest arrived. Though my heart was devoted to another, I still entered my name upon the list of Moussellina's admirers, being resolved (in case of success) to resign my claim in favour of my brother, upon whom she had made a most forcible impression. The Princess took her place; the lots were drawn, and each, as his name was called, advanced to attack Moussellina's risible muscles. Several had already failed; at length my name was pronounced, and I was on the point of obeying the summons, when I stopped on hearing the sound of a trumpet. The crowd opened to the right and left, and our assembly was augmented by the arrival of the King of Ophir.

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"I beg ten thousand pardons!" said Scherazade; "but pray, is that the gentleman?"

"The very same," replied Facardin; "by the death of his father, he is now in posesssion of the crown of Ophir."

"Then let me beg," she continued, "that before you

go any further, we may hear what happened to him in Denmark."

"Nothing of consequence," replied the King of Ophir very politely. "On my arrival at court, I found that the King, Queen, and Princess had all disappeared; that the Prime Minister had usurped the crown; and what was worse than all, that the Danish ladies have the largest splay-feet in the universe."

"Especially those whose legs are bandy!" said Dinarzade; but the Sultan, clapping his hand before her mouth, prevented her observation from being heard. The King of Ophir proceeded.

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"Having sought in vain for a foot that would fit my adorable slipper, I quitted Denmark, and soon after encountered the Prince of Trebizonde! After having had the misfortune to meet with the King of Astracan's orchestra (whose taste in music I must, however, confess to be truly original), I wandered from place to place, occasionally knocking a few giants on the head, and now and then killing a stray dragon or two; but nothing unusual happened to me, till I reached the presence of Moussellina. Here, as I performed a principal part, and as modesty forbids my relating my exploits myself, I must request the Prince of China to resume his narrative."

* * * * * * *

Facardin of the Grotto complied in the following terms:—

Moussellina rose from her throne, and advanced to welcome her royal visitor. No sooner did the King behold her, than his heart (that heart so easily enflamed!) became the captive of her eyes. His passion was too violent to be concealed for a moment: throwing himself at her feet, and seizing her ivory hand—"Angel! Goddess! Houri!" he exclaimed;

"why have you left your celestial abode to blind with the radiance of your beauty?"—But I need not repeat the amorous rhapsody with which he favoured us, for his words were soon drowned in an universal shout of astonishment. Conceive our feelings, magnanimous Schahriar! No sooner did the kneeling monarch commence his love-declaration than his chin began to lengthen, and before he had reached the end of his first sentence, its extent was truly wonderful and tremendous. At the same time an infinite number of little horns sprouted from every part of it, variegated with all the colours of the rainbow.

Heedless of this circumstance, the king still continued to declare his passion, and still his chin continued to increase its dimensions; till stretching itself quite across the tent, it fairly lodged itself within the wide-extended jaws of Fortimbrass, who unluckily stood opposite to him, gazing at this unaccountable phenomenon. No sooner did the King of Denmark find his mouth so unexpectedly invaded, than he hastily retreated, but in vain. The further that he retired the longer the chin grew, nor could he fly half so fast as his persecutor followed. By this time the tip of this preposterous feature had actually found its way into his throat; the horns tickled him terribly; and as it did not yet seem to have reached its full growth, he began to entertain serious apprehensions of being spitted upon his neighbour's chin like a woodcock. Greatly alarmed, he tried every imaginable means to effect his escape; and you will easily conceive that the postures into which he threw himself for this purpose, afforded no less mirth to the spectators than his persecutor's perseverance in pleading his passion (apparently quite unconscious, or quite careless, as to what his chin was about) excited surprise. But greatly was that surprise increased, when, overcome by her uncle's ridiculous distress, by the

strange and grotesque contortions of his monstrous mouth, and (above all) by the singularity of her admirer's making love with his chin in another man's stomach, Moussellina, for the first time in her life, burst into a violent fit of laughter, and threw herself back in her elbow-chair to indulge her merriment at her ease!

Fortimbrass could endure his situation no longer. Finding himself the jest of the whole assembly, and alarmed at the length of this embarrassing adventure, to which he literally could see no end, he suddenly gnashed his teeth together, snapped off a great piece of the intruding chin, and then unclosing his monstrous jaws, he spit out at the least three yards and a quarter. Instantly, the remainder of the stranger's chin shrunk to its natural size; no blood issued from the wound, nor was there any vestige of the bite. On the contrary, the King of Ophir seemed to awaken as from a dream. He gazed around him with a look of astonishment, rose hastily from his knees, and after examining Moussellina with an indifferent air, he made her a cold bow and retired from the circle.

As if willing to make up for lost time, the Princess laughed for three quarters of an hour without ceasing; then suddenly recollecting herself, she burst into tears, and cried for three quarters of an hour more. She had imbibed a sincere affection for my brother, and could not reflect without inexpressible sorrow that her mirth had made her the property of the King of Ophir. Her grief was shared by her disappointed admirers. Universal, therefore, was the satisfaction, when the King of Ophir advanced and addressed her as follows:—

"Weep not, fair Princess, nor suspect me of wishing to force your affections by insisting on a claim whose nature I consider as degrading both to you and to myself. Never

will I gain my bride by the talent of making myself ridiculous; and when I marry, I hope to owe the heart of my mistress to the strength of my attachment, not to the length of my chin; but before I proceed, let me thank your illustrious uncle for the service which he has rendered me, in snapping off a part of that preposterous feature. Doubtless, the enchanted water, which I drank upon Mount Atlas, rendered my heart susceptible of love at the sight of every female, and also increased the dimensions of my chin, whenever I was under the influence of the tender passion. No wonder that my addresses met with so little success! Though I was not aware of it myself, this personal enormity must certainly have rendered me a disgusting object in the eyes of the numerous beauties at whose feet I have sighed. I now feel that the spell is broken which kindled these fictitious flames in my bosom. I feel, too, that even your charms, fair Princess, transcendent as they are, cannot banish the remembrance of the lovely huntress of the grotto. For myself, then, I have only to request that you will try on this slipper; in return for which condescension, I here renounce my claim to your hand, declaring that he only whose valour can succeed in killing the crocodile is worthy the possession of such inestimable beauty."

A shout of applause followed this generous speech; the rivals eagerly accepted the proposal; but the Prince of Fez (who must blush to hear me mention that Moussellina's superior charms had made him forget his engagements to the Princess Nour) was particularly delighted; and his head being still full of the fictitious character which he was dressed to play, he clapped his false wings, and crowed thrice with such precise imitation, that an eagle mistook him for a real cock, and pouncing upon him with her talons, bore him away with the greatest celerity.

The spectators were petrified with grief and surprise, all but the King of Ophir. Snatching the bow and quiver with which Fortimbrass was furnished, he despatched an arrow, which pierced the robber through and through, and she instantly released her prey. Down tumbled the Prince; all ran in hopes of catching him; but before he either reached us or the ground, out of the river rushed the enormous crocodile, received him in his jaws, and bolted him as if he had been an oyster. The monster was now for retreating; but eager to assert his claim to Moussellina, one of her admirers was already prepared to attack him. Alas! he soon followed the unfortunate Zemin. Other combatants still succeeded, and were all lodged successively in the same dwelling-house, which appeared to be wonderfully capacious. My brother held out longer than the rest; nor were we quite without hopes of his ultimate success, till the monster suddenly gave him so terrible a gash with a nail belonging to one of his hinder feet, that he sank on the earth bleeding and insensible. Moussellina screamed and fainted. Far different were the emotions of the King of Ophir. His face was instantly flushed with joy; and rushing upon the crocodile (who was busy in swallowing my brother, and being embarrassed by one of the spurs, which stuck in his throat, perceived not the approach of this fresh antagonist), he seized him by the left leg, and chopped it off at a single blow.

A shout of joy applauded the action; but amazement again chained us in silence, when we saw the monarch lift the bleeding member to his mouth and swallow a large piece of it. With screams of rage the monster pursued him; but being obliged to hop along upon three legs, he overtook him not till the King had fairly devoured every bit of it except the bone. The great toe formed the last mouthful;

and no sooner did it enter the King of Ophir's lips than an enormous volume of fire and smoke issued from the crocodile's, who instantly fell lifeless upon the ground.

We ran eagerly and with one consent to inspect the monster. Conceive our surprise at discovering him to be composed of nothing but painted pasteboard! That such a machine could have swallowed even so much as Moussellina's shift, not to mention men, women, and children, appeared to us scarcely possible; but the President of the Royal Astracanical Society proved to us, by arguments quite incontrovertible, that it was not only possible, but extremely natural, for pasteboard not merely to swallow, but even to masticate; and he was proceeding to discuss the subject of digestion, if Moussellina's ladies had not begged him in all love not to meddle with that part of the question.

The discussion was interrupted by certain indistinct sounds issuing from the animal's carcase. Moussellina screamed out in a fright, that it certainly must proceed from a little brood of sucking pasteboard crocodiles; but, unterrified by this idea, the King of Ophir instantly ripped up the belly, and we beheld within it a table elegantly set out, brilliantly illuminated, and surrounded by a numerous company of both sexes.

I need not inform your Majesty that these were no other than the knights and ladies whom the monster had at different times imprisoned in his capacious maw. You will also suppose that this discovery greatly increased our satisfaction, and with every moment did fresh sources of joy present themselves. The crocodile's jaws were considerably wider than those of Fortimbrass, and no sooner did the Danish monarch make this remark than he felt his mouth contract to its natural size: the whole combat having been effected by magical illusion, my brother's wounds existed only in

idea; and now, to complete Moussellina's felicity, the King of Ophir addressed her as follows:—

"Again, lovely Princess, am I become the arbiter of your destiny; but I shall only use my rights to lay them at your feet. Survey this illustrious assembly; select from it the happy object of your choice; nor do I now despair of obtaining the object of mine. Prince Zemin's aërial expedition makes me hope that I have found the flying cock; the monstrous nail assures me that, in devouring the crocodile's leg, I finished the nauseous meal commenced upon Mount Atlas; and, as I have now performed every condition imposed by the fair huntress——"

"Except one!" exclaimed a shrill voice in the air; and, on looking upwards, we beheld the Matron of Mount Atlas mounted on the beautiful cock, who in a few seconds reached the ground. "You forget, sir knight," she continued, "that the possession of your mistress is attached to mine, and out of pure compassion I am now come hither to offer you my hand for the last time."

A shudder of disgust was the King of Ophir's answer, and he turned away, at the same time covering his face with his hands. Every one was eager to inform him that the matron and his fair huntress were one and the same person; but the lady herself prevented us.

"Why, the man must be crazy!" she resumed. "King of Ophir, cast upon me one look more, and then, if you choose, reject me for ever!"

Scarcely had she ceased to speak, when, in place of the cock and the matron, we beheld a damsel of admirable beauty, leaning upon the arm of a stranger, whose dress sufficiently announced the Emperor of China. Everyone expressed their satisfaction at the disenchantment of these illustrious persons; my father embraced my brother and

myself most affectionately, and Fortimbrass rewarded the King of Ophir's services by presenting him with his daughter's hand; while Moussellina declared her election of my fortunate brother. The hour growing late, the princess requested Fortimbrass to take charge of the emperor's accommodations, and insisted on sharing her own apartment with Sapinella.

The assembly now broke up: we all retired in high spirits. Alas! of how short duration was our felicity! Suddenly we were alarmed by a loud cry; it issued from the tent in which we had that moment left the two princesses, and, on turning round, what was our agony at perceiving it rising into the air. By the light of the moon we could distinguish the affrighted ladies, who were tearing their flowing locks and beating their ivory bosoms: the tent continued to ascend, and in a few minutes disappeared entirely.

Our joy was now converted into sorrow: the two royal brothers tore out their hair by handfuls. As for the King of Ophir, he drew his sword, and protested that he would not live another moment; and we were too much occupied with our own feelings to prevent him from executing his threats. Luckily, a powerful arm suddenly wrested the weapon from his grasp: it was the arm of no less a personage than the admirable Caramoussal.

"Hold, King of Ophir," said he: "know that I have wilfully thrown the princesses into Feridoun's hand, and I trust that this transient evil will soon produce a lasting good. The loss of his enchanted leg has greatly diminished the power of our foe, and I can now enter the lists with him on equal terms; nay, I can even visit the crystal island unknown to him, and in consequence can at length execute a design which I have long meditated. In the meanwhile, let all concerned hasten to the court of India; there will I meet you

on the first of April, and make each happy in the possession of his respective wishes. Yet, before we part, let me, in one respect at least, restore tranquillity to my royal brother of Denmark."

Thus saying, he drew from beneath his robe the well-known green velvet bag: on opening it, legs, arms, hands, and hips rolled out in promiscuous confusion. The enchanter arranged them in proper order, took out a needle and thread, stitched the disjointed limbs together, and in less than half-an-hour Fortimbrass clasped once more in his arms his lovely consort. This difficult task Caramoussal performed so neatly as to convince us that his mother had quite mistaken the bent of his genius, and by making him a very indifferent musician had deprived the world of an admirable tailor.

Caramoussal then disappeared. We obeyed his orders, and have reached your court on the appointed first of April. Doubtless, the Enchanter will soon arrive, and till then inexpressible will be our impatience for the solution of all these mysteries.

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Facardin of the Grotto was silent. Schahriar returned his thanks, and then inquired of the Prince of Fez—"How he liked his abode in the crocodile's stomach, and whether being eaten was not a very comical sensation?"

"The whole of that affair," answered Zemin, "was a mere magical delusion. The crocodile was nothing more than an ingenious machine, whose springs Feridoun understood well how to manage, and whose interior served him as a place of confinement for his prisoners. In making those prisoners, his object was to gain possession of the persons of the four illustrious Facardins, on one of whom (as he had lately discovered) his own destiny in a great measure depended, and events have proved that one to be the King of Ophir. But

as he had no particular enmity against them, he always was obliging enough to hurt his captives as little as possible in swallowing them, and suffered them to want for no accommodation which the crocodile's stomach could afford. For my own part, I was not a little surprised when, after rolling down the monster's throat, I found myself in a spacious hall, well-lighted, and occupied by a numerous company. Soon afterwards a splendid entertainment was served up; two ladies (whose names I learnt to be Cadiga and Harpiana, ugly as ourang-outangs, but extremely well-bred) did the honours of the table; and it is but doing the cook justice to say that I never ate a better dinner. The King of Ophir, however, made us rise in the middle of the first course, and, I believe, none of the guests were sorry to find themselves once more in open day-light."

By this time, evening was at hand: night shut in: still Caramoussal gave no signs of his approach! The illustrious strangers now began to be extremely uneasy. The uneasiness was greatly increased, when Dinarzade, recollecting the particular month and day, clapped her hands together and declared—"that the Enchanter had certainly sent them all the way to Delhi, for the express purpose of making April fools of them!"—This assertion gained additional credit with every succeeding minute; gradually all became impatient, captious, and ill-tempered; there was no abusive epithet which they did not liberally bestow on the author of this ill-timed joke, and they were on the point of giving up the business in despair, when Fortimbrass exclaimed that his brother certainly was at hand. In fact, a large ball of fire was discernible in the air, and all hastened into the palace-garden, in order to observe it more distinctly.

It descended with rapidity, and they now beheld a throne apparently formed entirely of clustered diamonds, and supported

upon the shoulders of an innumerable quantity of flying tigers, each of whom carried a carbuncle in his mouth by way of a flambeau. On the throne's summit, in a chair composed of gold and rubies, sat the victorious Caramoussal. At his feet were placed four damsels, magnificently attired, and veiled from head to foot. At the base of the throne, a monstrous one-legged giant lay extended, his hands bound with a strong cord, and his face distorted by fury into such horrible grimaces, that no sooner were Caramoussal and his companions on terra firma, than the ladies one and all requested to be relieved from so disagreeable a sight. In this request, Schahriar (who at the first glance recognised the Giant of the Ocean, and in consequence trembled in every limb) joined most heartily. The Enchanter complied; on his muttering a few words, the diamond wall opened, the giant sank into it, and the throne rising again into the air, soon disappeared with its odious inmate.

Caramoussal having paid his first compliments to the assembly, begged leave to introduce his travelling companions. One of the damsels had not waited for that ceremony: on her first landing, she threw aside her veil, and hastened to embrace the Prince of Fez.

"Is it you, charming Nour?" exclaimed Zemin, in whom the sight of her improved charms rekindled his early affection; "are you then mine once more, and can you forgive my unpardonable inconstancy?"

"Reflect on the dangers to which my curiosity has exposed you," replied Nour, "and you will find that I too have many pardons to ask. Then let all be forgotten; let me but hold the first place in your heart, and I shall be content to hold only the fourth in beauty."

Zemin forbore to answer, on perceiving Caramoussal approach with another of the damsels, whose veil he raised.

"'Tis Moussellina!" exclaimed in one breath her lover and the King of Astracan, and they hastened to receive her.

The third stranger now advanced, and was unveiled in the same manner.

"'Tis Sapinella!" cried both Fortimbrass and the King of Ophir, and clasped her alternately to their bosoms.

Every eye was now bent on Caramoussal's fourth companion. Who could she possibly be? The Enchanter led her forward; he lifted her veil, and Facardin of the Grotto beheld with rapture the original of his beloved miniature.

"Mercy upon me!" screamed out Dinarzade: "let me die, but it's the Prince of Trebizonde!"

"No, lovely Dinarzade," said the stranger, while with a smile she extended her hand; "were I indeed a Prince, as I once seemed to be, and as you once thought me, my sentiments towards you would be very different. At present, I can only say that what you so generously bestowed in love upon the Prince Facardin, shall be most amply returned in friendship by the *Princess Facardina!*"

Dinarzade blushed not a little at this speech, but the company were too much occupied to notice her confusion. They joined in pressing the Enchanter to unravel this mysterious business, and he gratified them without loss of time.

HISTORY OF THE ENCHANTER, CARAMOUSSAL

I shall begin by informing you that besides her three sons, Mergian-Banou was the mother of a daughter, whom at an early age she gave in marriage to the Prince of Trebizonde, and having done this, she troubled her head no more about her. In truth, Zemira's beauty was no re-

commendation in the eyes of a mother, who had not withdrawn her own claims to admiration: but I need not describe my sister, since you behold in her daughter Facardina her living image. It was indeed, continued he, addressing his discourse to Facardin of the Grotto; it was indeed Zemira's picture, which you, Prince, found on the banks of the river, where it had just been lost by Facardina's secretary. Thus, therefore, is the oracle explained, which gave you so much alarm; and I am happy to announce, that although the original of that miniature never can be yours, you will possess in Facardina her mother's exact counterpart.

My books had informed me that the ultimate happiness of my family would in a great measure depend upon a Prince born upon a particular day, and who should bear the singular name of Facardin. The day arrived: the Empress of China produced male twins, and the Queen of Astracan a son and a daughter. Now then I was strangely perplexed to find out which of these three boys was the Prince in question. I consulted my book in vain; and at length, fearing to miss the right one, I desired that all three might bear the appellation of Facardin. My brother made no difficulty in obliging me; but it seems the Queen of Astracan on her death-bed had made her husband solemnly promise that her son should be called after his maternal grandfather, and this promise neither prayers nor menaces could prevail on him to break. As it was on this boy that I founded (and that very justly) my strongest expectations, I was obliged to take advantage of a fire in the palace of Astracan to steal him away, and to commit him to the care of the wise King of Ophir, by whom (under the name of Facardin) he was brought up as his own. But it is now time that he should resume his original appella-

tion. Receive, then, from my hands, King of Astracan, a son whose exploits have already proved him worthy of such a father; nor need you, lovely Sapinella, hesitate any longer to look upon him as your husband. The stars, indeed, forbade your union with Facardin of Ophir; but (though planetary laws permitted me not to reveal the secret) know, the lover who now kneels at your feet is in fact Zalmoreddin, Prince of Astracan.

Two years elapsed, when I received intelligence that my sister had lost her husband, but was hourly expected to produce an heir to the principality of Trebizonde. I hastened to consult the stars respecting this unborn infant. I found that it would be the most beautiful girl in the universe: but that, should she ever fall into Feridoun's power, the total destruction of our family would ensue. Instantly my mother's injunction respecting the three most beautiful Princesses flashed upon my mind! My niece evidently would be one of them; and it struck me that, while I kept her out of his hands, he could not possibly execute his evil designs in their whole extent. This reflection made me advise my sister to bring up her daughter as a boy; and, the more to mislead Feridoun, I bestowed on my infant niece the same name which I had already given to her cousins. I was obeyed in every particular; though, during her visit to the Crystal Island, Facardina was on the very brink of discovery. Nothing, indeed, but the terror of the sword which she carried with her into the bath, and with which she solemnly vowed to make the head fly from the shoulders of any one who should dare to peep at her before she had slipped on her dressing-gown, could have prevented her sex from being ascertained by the prying eyes of Crystallina's attendants.

As it happened, every thing succeeded to my wish;

Facardina's secret was unsuspected; Feridoun, having vainly endeavoured to discover the third Princess, persuaded himself at length that the fault was in his magic lantern, and that the Princess of Serendip was in fact the person of whom he had been so long in search. This was what I had expected, and wished. No sooner was he thoroughly possessed with this belief, than I suffered him not only to get possession of Moussellina and Sapinella, but even of the third spinning-wheel. Feridoun now reckoned himself secure of victory. He immediately set his fair captives to work; terror obliged them to obey; and he flattered himself that he should soon be master of the wonderful cord, so long and so ardently desired. But he was not aware that every night, as soon as he retired to rest, I transported Facardina to the Crystal Island, where she occupied the place of Nour at the third wheel. An enchanted water rendered sleep unnecessary for the Princesses; the cord spun during the Giant's sleep was regularly put into my hands at daybreak; and when Feridoun entered the room, he found his three captives busy at their work, and everything in perfect order.

Last night saw their magic labours completed. The important cord was of a length sufficient to reach from the summit of Mount Atlas to the surface of the sea; and so well was I pleased at receiving the last yard, that I could not restrain a shout of joy. It alarmed Feridoun, who hastened to learn the cause, and great was his surprise, when on entering the chamber, he beheld me seated there. Snatching the unfinished rope from the hands of Nour, he suddenly threw it round me, and attempted to bind my arms; but I burst the flimsy bond with the utmost ease, and then throwing him the real talismanic cord, no sooner did it touch him than he sank on the ground unable to

resist. I then transformed the Crystal Island into a moveable throne, bound my vanquished enemy at its foot, and hastened hither with my beautiful companions.

I must just mention, that when Feridoun seized upon the empire of China, I thought it prudent to conceal my two nephews from his wrath, the one in the grotto of a Chinese mandarin, the other at the court of the King of Cappadocia. I believe I have now cleared up everything that was at all mysterious. However, should any part of these adventures still appear unintelligible, the company must ascribe it entirely to their own want of comprehension, and not to any defect in my narrative.

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The joy which now prevailed through the assembly could only be equalled by that of my readers at reaching the end of this long-winded history. The four marriages were celebrated next morning; and Facardin's secretary, as well as the worthy old Fi-fum-foam-fim, luckily arrived just in time for the ceremony. As to Dinarzade, she married Caramoussal.

So great was the happiness of these new-wedded couples, that nothing was left for them to wish, except that their situation might never alter. To prevent this, the Enchanter raised a magnificent structure on the summit of Mount Atlas, where everything was to be found that could delight the senses, or interest the heart. An ever-flowing stream of that precious water, which had so long preserved to Mergian-Banou the blessings of beauty and youth, meandered through the garden; and a talisman, fixed over the principal gate, forbade the approach of Satiety. Thither Caramoussal transported the whole company (except the Sultan and his family) then assembled in Schahriar's palace: there they fixed their abode never to leave it, and there, I doubt not, they

continue to reside: at least I never heard anything to the contrary.

Farewell, gentle reader, and good night; may you sleep soundly, and dream pleasantly. If you are a bachelor, make haste to get well married; if you are already a husband, waste not your wife's time and your own at night in listening to childish stories like Schahriar.

End of Part II. of The Four Facardins, written by Mat Lewis.

THE FOUR FACARDINS

AN ARABIAN TALE

PART II

(WRITTEN BY MONSIEUR DE LEVIS)

THE Prince of Trebizonde thus continued:—

A whole fleet of gondolas, richly painted and gilded, had on board musicians who played a concert as soft and dulcet as that of the musicians of the escort was wild and discordant. Then followed a marine car of peculiar construction. It was a large shell of mother-of-pearl, drawn by four-and-twenty swans, in which was seen a nymph gracefully reposing on a couch strewn with sea-moss. Two peacocks perched on the brilliant shell sheltered her from the scorching sun-beams with their expanded and fan-like tails, which they so adjusted to every undulation of the fairy barque, that the delicate complexion of their lovely mistress was never for an instant exposed to the meridian rays. She was the perfection of beauty, and it was difficult to say which was the more worthy of admiration, her slender and graceful figure or her charming features. All was so deliciously in unison, that envy could not detect a flaw—the only thing that astonished, but did not shock, was that her bright and flowing hair was of a sea-green hue. This nymph did the honours of the aged stream to Moussellina the Serious, who followed her on a floating island, covered with all the flowers of spring. The

dolphins which drew it, and the tritons who sported around, threw up unceasing jets of water sparkling like silver, which kept the air deliciously cool, whilst a band of syrens sung an ode in her honour. I was curious to see this person, equally celebrated for her beauty and her seriousness. Both these appeared to me to exceed every idea I had formed of them, and I felt assured that it was easier to subdue the monster, than to overcome the gravity of the Princess. As I was thus reflecting, there was a sudden sound as if of distant thunder, and presently the waters of the stream, rising in a rapid flood, spread their silver all over the meadows—then a kind of humid mountain, swiftly advancing, suddenly opened, and the King of the Crocodiles appeared. He had two sharp-edged horns, which moved like the blades of a pair of scissors, and a throat so prodigious that a moderate-sized gondola could with ease have entered it; and as to his teeth,—though I had not time to count them,—I can assure your Highness that they were long enough and strong enough to have ground a half squadron of cavalry, men and horses, to impalpable atoms. At the sight of this monster everybody ran away except the knights, who could not do so with any decency.

The monster began by swallowing a boat-load of musicians, and we heard him distinctly cracking those poor fellows, their violins, basses, double-basses, horns and other instruments. I then advanced towards the bank resolved to attack him, although the disproportion between us was as great as that between the largest elephant and the smallest lap-dog.

As I drew near to him, I observed on his muzzle something moving — what was my surprise when I beheld distinctly a spinning-wheel in full action; but at this instant, my attention was distracted by another spectacle no less

wonderful. A shaggy giant appeared in the stream in a piragua impelled by twelve black rowers, who actively using their paddles quickly reached the monster's rear; then the giant springing on the creature's back, walking as steadily as if on terra firma, advanced towards his head in the hope of seizing on the spinning-wheel, but unsuccessfully, for the great beast feeling himself tickled suddenly turned over on his side, and throwing the giant into the water snapped off his leg just above the knee. Crystallina, who had recognised her evil genius, and was frightened to death lest he should succeed, uttered a cry of joy when she saw him turned over, and another twice as loud when she saw his leg with the fatal toe-nail in which lay all his force go down the insatiate maw of the Crocodile King.

The Crocodile and the Genius then sinking beneath the flood, the fright gradually diminished, and every body again approached the banks of the river. The lovely Moussellina, still greatly alarmed, landed from her floating islet, and returned by land to her father's palace; the Nymph of the Shell sunk into her humid abode, and I found myself once more alone with Crystallina, the great Facardin, the Knight of the Cock, and him of the Awl.

Sir Knight, I said to the last, when we were interrupted you were kindly relating to me the history of the Princess Moussellina, and your designs as to her attractive charms; but you did not explain to me how it was that you all three found yourselves in such very strange attire. I am perfectly aware, that as a warrior I am not in sooth more suitably attired than yourselves, and that it is possible I present a somewhat singular aspect in my dressing-gown, night-cap, slippers, and a drawn sword. Yet you must agree that it is still more extraordinary to see a noble knight with all the appendages of a cobbler, a trade which I

must beg your pardon for saying, has nothing very elevated about it; and moreover, the fish-kettle which your honourable companion wears on his head as a helmet, equally astonishes me.

Signor Facardin, replied the Knight of the Cock, flapping his winged stumps, an illustrious adventurer like you ought to be accustomed to prodigies, and no singularity of disguise or appearance should surprise you — when this Knight so far demeaned himself as to assume the shoeing-horn and awl, he desired to give a proof of his submission to the beauty who reigns here. The incomparable Moussellina has heard with secret annoyance the praises, no doubt exaggerated, so incessantly bestowed on the foot of the Princess Sapinella of Jutland; she has begged that it might be understood, that if hers was not as celebrated, it was not the fault of nature, but of the shoemakers of Astracan, clumsy cobblers, who disfigured by a mis-shapen envelope the charming proportions of her delicate foot. She therefore has refused all the shoes lately presented to her, and as the winter approaches, the King, the most tender of crowned fathers, is in a state of most horrible disquietude, and is a prey to a thousand apprehensions lest his darling daughter should be attacked by colds, coughs, cramps, rheumatism, and the other small million of such ills. It is to acquire his good-will that the Prince of the Carpathian Mountains, whom you now behold, has not disdained to take lessons of a shoemaker of the court, hoping soon to surpass his instructor in delicacy of taste, and his intimate knowledge of drawing; love ennobles everything, and on his return to his own dominions, it is his decided intention to institute the noble order of the Shoeing-horn, which will become as time-honoured as many other orders, whose origin is by no means more illustrious.

As for me, said the Facardin of the Fish-Kettle, I have been for the last two years over head and ears in love with the divine Princess of Astracan, whose portrait only has hitherto met my ardent gaze. I left the country of Arabia Petrea, where I had concluded several very brilliant adventures, to undertake this; I embarked at Florispahan, a port on the Red Sea, but lost all my companions in a frightful storm, and found myself by some incomprehensible means in the submarine abode of that villainous Genius whose recent discomfiture you have just witnessed. I shall not trouble you with the particulars of what occurred to me in these deep grottos. This lady (and he looked to Crystallina) has probably entered into some details, and if she has not, why I fear that to describe it to minutiæ might somewhat embarrass her. However, not to dwell on any precise particular, having seen most of the curiosities of this watery abode, I contrived to escape by the aid of Mademoiselle Harpiana, whose complaisance I requited as I had done that of her mistress, and I bade adieu for ever to the crystal rock. On disembarking from the gilded bark I traversed Arabia and Persia, and arrived, after experiencing a thousand dangers, at the court of the King of Astracan. There I saw that splendid Princess whose beauty has already caused so many misfortunes. When I had somewhat recovered from the first overwhelming amazement which the thrilling glances darting from her lovely eyes cause in all who are daring enough to gaze on her charming countenance, I tried to arm myself against their magic influence by the reflection that a person who does not speak cannot by any possibility be a woman, talking being a characteristic of the softer sex as essential as any other. But the Princess, whose penetration is marvellous, perceiving my doubts, determined to avenge herself by one

of those surprising looks which subjugate all hearts. From that instant resigned to my fate, I only sought how to please the beauty who is dearer to me than my life, and how to loosen the tongue which cannot fail to say the most delicious things in the world as soon as it is set in motion. I reflected, however, that this silence might arise from some supernatural cause, and immediately I went in quest of the great Caramoussal, the most skilled and humane of enchanters, and asked of him a recipe for at least making the Princess talk, if I should be unable to make her smile. During the three thousand years he had been a professor of necromancy he had never before been asked to make a woman speak, so that he was rather unprepared on this point, and it was necessary that he should look through, one after the other, more than three hundred successive folio volumes. When he had perused these diligently, he gave me a small golden box, no bigger than a thimble, which contained an amber case fastened with a diamond padlock, within which were some imperceptible grains filed from Solomon's Seal. I am to use this as seasoning for a pasty made of parrots' tongues, of which the Princess is to eat a mouthful fasting, every morning for a week—and then she will speak.

The moment I was in possession of this treasure and the prescription, I set out for the Land of Parrots, where I made a terrific slaughter, preserving only the tongues of the slain for my pasty. I took, moreover, about thirty dozen of the finest, and went forthwith to Astracan, intending to intreat the Princess to submit to the regimen prescribed by the Enchanter. But by a caprice, which unfortunately is but too common amongst beautiful women, she actually refused to undergo this simple experiment, making it understood by signs that it was not consistent with etiquette that

the daughter of the King of Astracan should eat a pie which had not been made according to all the rules of culinary art, whilst her father kept fifty head cooks and seven hundred sub-pastry-makers in his royal establishment. This was but a mode of repulsing my pretensions, and of preventing me from entertaining hopes at which her pride revolted. The King, her father, who was well aware of Caramoussal's talent, and whose desire to see a termination to his daughter's long silence was immeasurably intense, urged her, but in vain —she was inflexible.

At last, by way of removing every shadow of an excuse, I enrolled myself among the body of cooks, and in a solemn audience graciously vouchsafed to me by the King, I laid down my sword to take up this spit, exchanged my helmet for this tin kettle, swearing that I never would again resume my arms until the Princess, touched at my devotion, should yield to my wishes. This step has been differently viewed by different eyes at court; every one of the sensitive and easily excited ladies there, was literally melted at my proceeding; and that very evening I might have reaped a rich reward of tender sympathy, but the majority of the courtiers evinced that they considered my conduct as the height of folly. Some more malignant still, affected to deduce therefrom the evidence of a low and grovelling mind. They even ventured to show this by their sarcasms, and I was compelled to spit some five or six of these malevolent wags to teach the remainder a lesson. Since then I have been perfectly quiet, occupying my time in spinning with my brother adventurers, and I now invite you, Prince of Trebizonde, to share our labours and our pleasures.

I thanked the tall Facardin for his politeness, and was about to ask him the meaning of all the spindles and spinning I saw around me, and which so greatly puzzled me,

when we were interrupted by a loud fanfare of trumpets and other warlike instruments. It proceeded from a troop of cavaliers, each bearing a falcon of the North on his wrist, and leading, in leashes, greyhounds fastened to each other with silver chains. In the midst of them I beheld a closed chariot, drawn by four rein-deer, harnessed abreast: two dwarfs as black as ebony, perfectly naked, with swords, who guarded the door of the vehicle; and I soon found that such precautions were not used unreasonably, for they guarded the loveliest princess that graced the earth.

. . . . . .

"Really," at this moment exclaimed the Princess Dinarzade, interrupting the Prince of Trebizonde, "we have had enough of princesses and nymphs, and in what a piteous plight you have left them all! Moussellina the Serious has no tongue, no slippers, no shift! the Nymph of the Steel Bow is buried in her grotto! and Sapinella in the snows of Scandinavia! As to Facardin of Mount Atlas, and even the Sorrowful Ape, who had begun to interest me, God only knows when we shall hear any news of them! And yet, now, here we have fresh comers!"

"Young lady, do not be impatient," exclaimed the Sultan of the Indies, endeavouring to repress a yawn; "is it Trebizonde's fault if you have so good a memory, and require from him a chain of ideas and facts with which so many authors dispense? Prince, continue your recital, which really pleases me considerably,—the only thing that shocks me is your denuded negroes, and I must entreat of you to bestow on them some species of garment, however small. I admire decency, alike from my natural inclination and my position in the world. When a man has fifteen hundred concubines, a seraglio would become a most shocking, dis-

reputable place, if we were not very strict in every thing connected with morals, and that sort of thing."

. . . . . .

Let not the chaste imagination of your most decorous Highness take the slightest alarm, responded the Prince of Trebizonde, respectfully; the two small negroes to whom I have alluded were certainly naked, but they were deprived of all life and motion; and we are all aware that nudity has been one of the privileges accorded to statues from time immemorial. With respect to the reproach cast upon me by the fair Dinarzade, it is the more misplaced, as the princess shut up in the chariot was no other than the Infanta of Denmark, the celebrated Sapinella of Jutland. But in what a state did she present herself before us! Her lovely eyes were closed; the roses had fled from her fair cheek; the lilies alone remained; and it required a keen and attentive look to discover the scarcely-perceptible motion of her beautiful bosom — the only symptom of life she gave. At her feet, extended on a lion's skin, was a young knight, who seemed also in a trance. The chariot having stopped. I went up to it, and almost wept when I discovered, in this pitiable condition, the amiable Facardin of Mount Atlas, from whom I had been so unluckily separated by the infernal music of the royal cortege of Astracan. "Dearest Prince," I sobbed out, "what can have reduced you to this deplorable condition? — no doubt, some supernatural power; for I know well your valour; and although I never heard any one but yourself speak of your exploits, yet there is in your recital such an air of candour and truth, that I believe all you have said as if I had seen it done. What can I do to aid you?" He made no reply—he was senseless! "Awake, dear Prince!" "Alas, Sir Knight," said his Esquire, who followed the chariot, bedewing the earth with two torrents

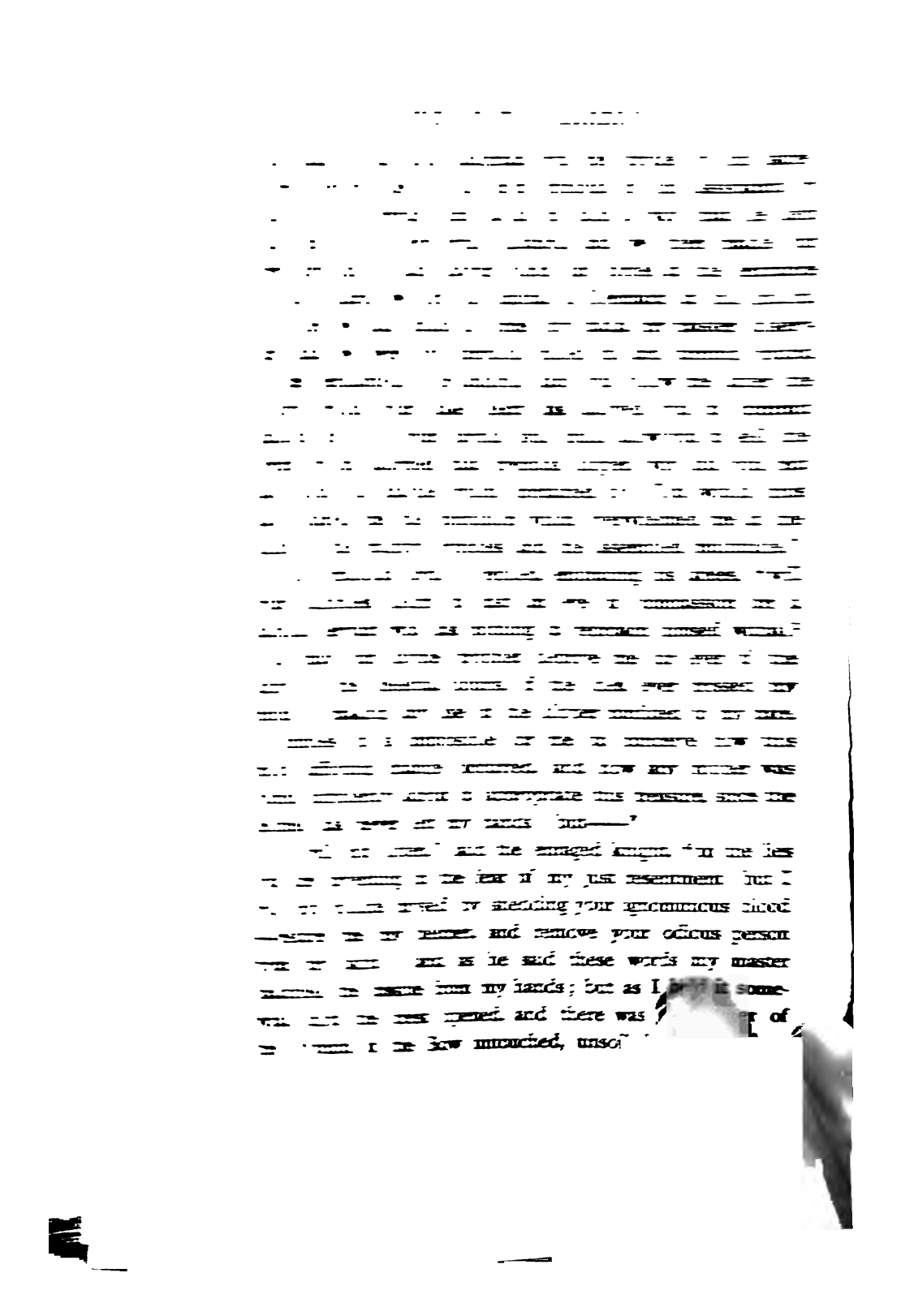
of tears, "all your efforts are superfluous: the spell which binds the unhappy Facardin in this death-like slumber is the art of that cruel old woman of Mount Atlas, who has never forgiven his refusal, and what is more frightful still, is, that he is thus recompensed for the service he has rendered to the father of the Princess before you, the great Fortimbrass."

This singular statement excited the utmost curiosity amongst all the spectators, who formed a circle round the disconsolate Esquire, who thus continued:—

After having vainly sought to rejoin the Prince of Trebizonde, my master pursued his journey as soon as our camels had recovered from their intense fright; but everywhere he found ladies wholly insensible to his attractions of mind and person, and in no one instance did he meet with a foot the least in the world in proportion to the marvellous slipper he carried in his helmet. He went on his way, dispirited, through a large forest of palms which grew up from a rocky soil, when suddenly he heard a voice exclaim—"Facardin, whither art thou wending?" "Alas!" was his reply, "I have abandoned myself to my evil fortune." "Despair," responded the voice, "is unworthy a lover of glory: thou art brave, I know, but the courage of the heart is as far beyond the courage of the sword as Mount Atlas is above the waves which spend their force at its base—return to Denmark; hope is the leading-staff of the wise."

Here the voice ceased, and the knight was about to comply with the advice, when I ventured to suggest that commonplace phrases were by no means sage counsel; and that we had before us no means of success in the dangerous adventure with the Princess of Jutland, whilst he had every idea that he should be hanged, and I also with him for company's sake, which was very ignoble for a knight of his quality, and

far from agreeable for a poor squire like myself—for it is right you should know, Prince of Trebizonde, that on arriving at the court of Fortimbrass my master had declared his intention to shoe the Princess, in consequence of which he was admitted to an essay which had proved fatal to so many thousands of persons. The ceremony was remarkably imposing: there was a high platform raised on which the Princess was seated; on her right was the Lord High Chancellor of the kingdom, bearing on a cushion covered with cloth of gold the crown, destined to recompense the success of the enterprise, whilst on the other side was a spectacle by no means so tempting—it was the hangman and his myrmidons, at the foot of a gallows fifty feet in height. My master approached the platform, and saluted the Princess with a grace, which if he had not been bewitched, would have gained for him the heart of every lady in the palace — it seemed as if the richness of his armour, the elegance of his figure, and his distinguished manners, had made some slight impression on the heart of the Infanta, who took a sly glance at him which bespoke deep interest, whilst she awaited with evident uneasiness the result. My master turning towards me, took from my hands the brilliant helmet in which was inclosed the precious slipper—when, oh horror! agony! rage! there was in its stead only a wretched, worn-out, tattered shoe. I could not attempt to depict my consternation, the Chevalier's fury, the Princess's astonishment, and all those mingled feelings which in a moment pervaded the multitude assembled. My master would have killed me, and I was so amazed at this unexpected event that I should not have offered any resistance; but the hangman claimed me as his due, and even raised his pretensions to the illustrious Facardin, upon whom he ordered his vile assistants to lay hands; but he, transported with indignation, sliced off



had disappeared. We then saw plainly that some supernatural power had mingled in the affair, and my master restored me to his friendship and confidence, whilst I felt no resentment at his anger, for appearances had been much against me—so much so, that had he killed me in real earnest, I really think I should have forgiven him heartily.

When such events happened to us at the court of Denmark, you may judge, Sir, if I had not good reasons for seeking to dissuade my master from again visiting the coasts of Denmark, where all the wit and valour in the world could not have prevented us from receiving some new affront. "Let us rather go," I said, "to Cathay or Bactriana, where you may offer your arm to one of the two kings of those vast countries, who wage such fierce wars for such very trifling grounds of offence. They will give you a warm reception: in no time you will there acquire one or two provinces—and that kind of amusement makes time pass away; and if you will believe me, you will in this manner put a most agreeable termination to your useless and fatiguing wanderings. Besides, all the women's eyes are so bewitched, that they can't bear the sight of you, and might perchance prefer such a clod as I am. Moreover, you can never hope to find a cock that can fly like an eagle, nor a foot that can indue your slipper, unless it be perhaps that of the Princess Sapinella. And recollect how a malicious enchanter prevented you from even making a trial. Resign, then, with a good grace your Nymph with the Bow, and fix yourself, after the victories you will gain, in some fine castle, where we may partake of the pleasures of the chase, fishing, and other recreations."

Such sage advice appeared to be working its effect on my master, when the same accursed voice again cried out—

"Facardin! Facardin! despise the pusillanimous advice so unworthy of a hero. If success did not crown your noble efforts, your virtue will find its best recompense in your own heart."

"All very fine, Mistress Voice," says I, in a desperate rage; "but your fine maxims will not guarantee my master or myself from being hanged if we return amongst the Danes. We escaped from them very well, it is true, thanks to their surprise and our own courage; but if we return to brave them, they will overwhelm us by their numbers, and we must then perish."

The Knight was deaf to my prayers, obeying blindly the advice uttered by the mysterious voice, and again went on his way to Denmark. I followed him with a sorrowful countenance, auguring no good from this second journey.

During the first three hundred leagues nothing remarkable occurred; but, as we approached the Cimbrian Chersonesus, we discovered in the corner of a wood a lady richly dressed, and covered with a thick veil which reached to the ground. She was alone, and seemed plunged in the deepest grief. As soon as she perceived us she closed her veil, which had been half opened, and entreated us to succour her.

"The laws of chivalry place you beneath my protection," replied my master, with his wonted gallantry, "and of all my duties, it is this which costs me the least to fulfil."

"Vouchsafe, my lord, then, to give me your arm, and conduct me to my castle, which is close at hand. Discourteous knights, abusing my excessive confidence, would have behaved with outrageous dishonour, if you had not arrived most opportunely, and saved my virtue and my life; for I could never have survived such an event."

Then she rose and conducted us towards her dwelling.

My master would have taken leave on the drawbridge; but she pressed us so earnestly to enter, that there was really no refusal. The grand apartment of the castle was decked with superb tapestries of exquisite manufacture, representing persons whimsically clad, but so perfectly executed, that they resembled life; and what was more wonderful still, was, that at the sound of an organ placed at the extremity of the apartment they began to move, and went through complete scenes of acting. There were also other curiosities in the castle; but the mistress was the greatest curiosity of all. After supper, during which she kept her veil constantly closed, she led the knight into a small boudoir, and said to him (as he afterwards informed me)—

"Signor, all the dangers you have hitherto undergone are as nothing in comparison with that which at this moment besets you. I must tell you that you are in the ancient habitation of the Gloutonskys, who are descended by the female side from the now almost extinct race of Ogres. I am the last offspring of that illustrious and so much calumniated family, whose only reproach was a love for human flesh, which in itself has nothing reprehensible when cruelty does not characterise it. Behold, Signor, the proofs of my noble origin."

At these words she raised her veil, and the chevalier saw, with mingled horror and astonishment, a face which was handsome, though somewhat masculine, with such an immense mouth, that it would probably have entirely circled the head if the ears had not fortunately been there to prevent it, and it touched these so nearly that there was not room even for the smallest fraction of a whisker. Nature, who does nothing by halves, had liberally furnished this enormous cavity. Forty teeth appeared in front, whilst

thirty-five were behind, and the whole was terminated by two tusks like those which formed the defences of the Erymanthian boar, and which projected several inches.

"Madam," said the knight to her, "I will dispense with the production of your pedigree. I take for granted all you say, from your very appearance. But deign, I beseech you, to inform me what are the perils I have here to dread. I have already had the honour of encountering lions, bears, a hairy giant, and sundry other ferocious beasts. If, however, I must fight again this evening, I am at your orders, although it is pretty nearly bed-time."

"I expected no less from your indomitable courage," replied the mulatto Ogress. "You will have none but men to contend with; but they are many and daring. They consist of eight noblemen of the vicinity, who for some months have aspired to my hand, as much," she continued with a coquettish air, "for the charms of my person as the vast property belonging to me. In my opinion, an affair so serious as marriage should not be lightly dealt withal; and I have thought it very incumbent, as well as prudent of me, to know them all in every particular, before I made up my mind. I have therefore, with this intent, accorded to them in turn private interviews, which have been carried on for some time without discovery, until by some fatality altogether inexplicable, the mystery has been revealed. They then all met, and their love changing to rage, they have declared to me that either I must surrender to them my castle and lands, which they propose to divide amongst them, or they would come and seize upon them with fire and slaughter. This very evening they are coming with their soldiers to attack these ramparts, which are, alas! very feeble. They are intrepid warriors——"

"They must be, Madam," interrupted the Knight, "from

what you have narrated to me; but, my fair friend, can I conscientiously, after what has occurred on your part, defend your honour and virtue against these gentlemen, who are all well aware——"

"My lord," hastily responded the tender Ogress, "if pity does not move you on my behalf, let gratitude plead for me. I have resolved to make you master of my person and my property, and I do not declare this upon compulsion, for if I were mistress of the first throne in the world, I should prefer you to all the men on earth." This delicate declaration was accompanied with a very languishing look and a smile as amorous as her protruding tusks would allow. My master could well have spared so warm a confession, but replied very mildly—"I am aware, Madam, that sensibility by no means depends on the size of the mouth, and I am very grateful for your declaration in my favour, but I have engagements which it is impossible to break through, and all I can do for you (for I would not have it said that you sought my protection in vain) is, instead of attempting to defend your untenable ruin of a castle, to take you with me to the court of the great Fortimbrass. He is endeavouring to find—why I know not—all over the world a mouth as wide as his own, nearly a foot long."

"That is precisely the measure of mine," responded the lady, "and I will accompany you whithersoever you please, for I am certain my passion for you will eventually triumph over your frigidity." This (as my master afterwards related to me) was what took place in the cabinet. We all departed by a private way, and soon after reached the capital of Denmark, with the visors of our helmets down, that we might not be recognised, and the lady with a thick veil closely drawn over her remarkable countenance. We sought a private audience with the King, in order to disclose to

him the marvel to which he attributed so high a value. As soon as he saw the Ogress, he exclaimed—

"Ah, my cousin! so I again see you?" So saying he flung himself into her arms, and their two extensive mouths giving each other the most expansive kiss the world ever saw or heard, Fortimbrass thanked my master very gratefully for having restored to him this wide-mouthed scion of his family, about whom he had long been greatly disquieted, not having heard of her for fifteen years, when she had retired into Bactriana; and thus it was that all the researches of his emissaries had been fruitless. The Princess, owing to circumstances too tedious for present detail, had been compelled to retire to Europe, and believing that the King of Denmark would not receive her at his court and own her as his relation, she would not risk his rebuff.

"The times are changed indeed!" said Fortimbrass to her; "so long as the queen was alive, I never could prevail on her to receive you with the honours due to your rank: she had need of all her virtue to bear even myself; although being removed one generation more than yourself from our common stock, I have no tusks; I therefore was precluded from recalling you. After her death I was alone in the world, with my daughter Sapinella, who monopolises my affections: but I must make sure of the succession to my kingdoms, and from her I cannot hope for progeny. Incessantly occupied with the beauty of her foot, which is in truth the most charming little thing in the world, and unable to find shoes to fit her, her reason and even her health are palpably suffering, and I have hourly alarms that I shall lose her, which would be my death-blow, and I should leave my kingdom a prey to factions and disorders which would rend it in pieces. There is not one descendant of the noble race of the Fortimbrass surviving, and I

must then have recourse to the line of the great Ogrog, the first King of Cape North and Loupgaroutia. You are lineally descended from him, my cousin: you are entitled to my dominions, and if you have no children, why, you are still of an age to have them."

The Ogress, who was naturally grateful and tender, thanked the King, and forgetful of the strong professions of love she had recently made, was so bedazzled with the charms of a crown, that she declared amorously to the King that she never would have children if he were not their father. This well-assorted match was thus decided on.

The Princess Sapinella, incessantly occupied about her shoes, seemed perfectly indifferent to this event. The wedding was celebrated with regal magnificence, the bride, covered from head to foot with crown jewels, in a gown of golden brocade richly worked with gems, only looked the more hideous from her splendour; but this did not preclude the Danish poets from making odes, composing hymns, ballads, rondeaus, and poems, in which they celebrated all her charms, including the ivory of her tusks; the total amounting, according to a close calculator, to a sum of fifty-six thousand five hundred and sixty-four verses, good and bad; moreover, each author thought his own verses admirable, and those of his competitors execrable, which was a double pleasure to themselves and none to the public, who never read their eulogistic productions.

My master, the Knight, had by no means lost sight of the object of his journey, and relying thoroughly on the voice, was anxious to recommence the trial of the slipper. He trusted that it would not disappear this time, and had even gone so far as to show it to the Princess, who had admired its shape and the beauty of the diamonds which formed the buckles. It was, however, requisite that the

ceremony should be public, and there was always the dread that the fairy, or evil genius, who had substituted the worn-out shoe for the precious slipper, might play the unseasonable prank over again. In this embarrassing position my master entreated Sapinella to allow him to try on this wonderful slipper first in private. She agreed, and put it on with as much ease as if it had been made for her. Her delight, and the joy of the Knight were excessive; but she was soon dismayed at the sudden appearance of the old hag of the mountain, who arrived astride on her spindle.

"Facardin!" she screeched out in her discordant voice, "behold the first condition imposed on you is fulfilled! Do you recollect what is that left you to perform, to attain the climax of your desires? There is an indispensable preliminary of which I must remind you, since you appear singularly oblivious on that important point. You must enjoy my favours; and I have no hesitation in declaring, since you appear somewhat backward in doing so yourself, that I shall not offer any coy resistance."

"Wretched beldam!" exclaimed the Knight, repulsing her with horror, "you ought rather think of your grave, than of love!"

"My little pet," replied the hag, through her nose, "why so cruel? Well, since you are so cold to me, so shall you be to all the world; and you, young Miss, who seem no better, why, you shall share his fate." So saying, she touched them both with her spindle, and they sunk instantly into a swoon, from which nothing can arouse them. As soon as the King learned this afflicting event, he sent to consult an oracle, one of his friends, who dwells in the caves of Boreas, two degrees from the pole; and he replied that there was no other remedy to cure the Princess than the laugh of Mousselina the Serious. But as all the world knows she never has laughed, and probably never will laugh, poor Fortimbrass

believed that this was a mere mockery; and he had already commanded that the cave of the oracle should be filled up with ten thousand cubic feet of ice and snow, when he thought better of it, and resolved to forward his daughter and the Facardin to the Princess of Astracan, to watch for the first laugh which should proceed from her mouth. The car you have seen was constructed for this purpose, and this long journey; and as for me, I will never quit the inanimate body of my poor master.

The faithful Esquire having thus terminated his recital, all the bystanders participated in his natural grief, and it was resolved to conduct the procession of this living funeral to the palace of the Princess Moussellina, in order to prove to her how beneficial it would be if she would at length take the trouble of laughing, were it only to break the enchantment of those illustrious personages.

On the road, the Prince of Trebizonde entreated the Knight of the Awl to let him know why spinning-wheels played so great á part in this country.

"We are all employed," was his reply, "in replacing the three hundred and seventy-four dozen of shifts that Moussellina has lost, hoping, moreover, that our awkward appearance, which seems ridiculous enough even to ourselves, may eventually make her laugh also; and, as you are engaged in this adventure, you must spin, as we do."

This occupation did not appear to me very compatible with the profession of arms, but I had no time to complain before we reached the royal residence of Astracan. At the noise made by the procession, the Princess appeared in the balcony, and when they narrated to her the sad adventure of Facardin and Sapinella of the small foot, in spite of the natural rivalry between women who are equally lovely, she was so tender-hearted that she could not help bursting into tears, the

natural consequence of the deplorable spectacle before her. This was widely different from laughing, and everybody was as miserable as possible, when an extraordinary spectacle attracted universal attention. The air was suddenly darkened, and a vast cloud overspread us, which, gradually lowering, was discovered to be an assemblage of several thousand birds of different species, preceding the flying chariot of the great Caramoussal, and forming his escort; or, rather, they were the officers of his house, for they all wore on their wings his sky-blue and saffron livery; and each had a ring, with his arms, on the right claw. His body-guard were vultures: his band of music, linnets and nightingales: his clerk of the closet was a gray parrot: and his poets two swans of Mantua. He had six eagles attached to his car; and a very nimble jackdaw was his postilion. In this equipage the worthy Enchanter reached the court of the King of Astracan. He was not alone: a lady, somewhat advanced in years, was on his right hand. She seemed in deep affliction, and gave her hand gravely to a small personage, very richly attired, but very ill-featured, as far as could be discovered, so ample was the Spanish ruff which concealed the whole of the lower part of his face, whilst his large plume of ostrich feathers covered the upper part. He wore yellow morocco boots, a vest of flame-coloured satin, a mantle of silver gauze, and a baldrick, whence hung a tolerably long sword. His breast was decorated with different orders, in diamonds, with their ribands either as scarves, or fastened to the buttonhole.

This attire was very imposing, and from the distance it was impossible to recognise, under this disguise, the Sorrowful Ape, of whom mention has been made in the earlier portion of these Memoirs. Unfortunately for him, the end of his tail appeared through his smallclothes, and a wicked page, as mischievous as they all are, perceiving it, went behind him as

he was making his first reverence to the Princess, and pinched it with all his might and main. The poor animal could not bear the nip, and made a horrible contortion of visage. The dress and gravity of the Ape had already inspired Moussellina with more gaiety than she had experienced in her life before. The antics and grimaces he made when his tail was pinched, and the blow he gave the page in revenge, completed the miracle, and a peal of laughter was distinctly heard from her lovely mouth.

An event so important and so propitious excited the utmost joy. The old King her father wept like a child; all the people were delighted, and shouted with rapture; and the musicians of the court, more noisy than ever, played so loudly as to drown every other sound: even the concert of the great Caramoussal's birds; until the latter, annoyed by all this uproar, made a signal with his staff, and then the music ceased; the singers remained open-mouthed, the fiddlers with their bows in the air, and the horn-players with their mouths filled with wind. The Ape profited by this silence to address the King.

"Seigneur," he said, with respectful assurance, "the oracle is accomplished. I have made your daughter laugh—your positive promise I rely on—I must espouse her."

I leave you to judge of the general indignation excited by the chimpanzee. "Send him to the menagerie," said some; "Show him at the fair," said others; whilst the more moderate were for dismissing him with a bag of nuts, and an interdict against his ever again appearing at court. All the noble knights who for some years had devoted themselves and their lives to this adventure shook again with rage. The tumult was at its height when, in order to appease it, the elderly lady who had accompanied Caramoussal advanced, and, raising the veil which concealed her features, said to the King of Astracan—

"Sire, and you princes and knights who hear me, I am the unhappy Dowager Princess of Trebizonde, whom misfortunes of a most uncommon nature have exiled from her dominions for the last twenty years. You may well conceive how painful is the confession I make at this moment, when I tell you that he whom you see under this repulsive form is a prince—is my son, as well as you, great Facardin, whom I recognise beneath the garb of a cock, and also the Facardin of Mount Atlas, who is at this instant recovering from his lethargy. You, Prince of Trebizonde, are my eldest son," she continued, turning towards me, "and I appeal to you for your love to your youngest brother."

"Madam," I replied, very respectfully, "if owing to some mysterious events, which I do not seek to fathom, I am really the brother of these knights, their noble manners and distinguished appearance make this alliance most honourable to me, and I most willingly admit it; but it is impossible that this monkey can have anything in common with us."

Caramoussal interrupted me, saying, in an authoritative tone: "Young man, all nature is covered with a veil, which the most piercing eyes are unable to penetrate; all here below is illusion and error! How do you know that the monkey's hide does not cover one of the noblest of hearts? Do we not see men of the most attractive appearance with feelings so debased as to place them on a level with brutes? And are there not lovely women to be found who are not less malicious than apes?"

"Anything you please, Sir Caramoussal," cried the King of Astracan, purple with rage. "You speak like an oracle, as you are; but it shall never be said that I have a chimpanzee for a son-in-law, and marmosets for grandchildren."

"Sire," replied the Enchanter, coldly, "the words of kings

are sacred. You have promised your daughter to him who should make her laugh, and it is to this young Prince that the Fates have accorded this, the signal favour, which so many rivals have for so long a time solicited. Still I can imagine your chagrin, and will try if it be in my power to assuage it."

He then waved his wand thrice in the air, and after a pause there was heard a cry like the distant crowing of a cock, and very soon after, the wonderful cock was seen, with his carbuncle crest and his diamond beak. He held in his left claw a grain of millet, which the Enchanter broke. This grain of millet contained a piece of spider's web, on which was written in magic characters the following mystic oracle, which Caramoussal thus read:—

ORACLE.

"*If the Princess Moussellina espouses Facardin under his present form, all their children will be invested with the divine appearance characteristic of their illustrious origin. That at her will he may assume a human shape; but in that case, Destiny decrees that the Princess will only have a monkey for a son, and a marmoset for a daughter.*"

This terrible oracle, clearer than oracles usually are, was expressed in the original in very bad verse. The Princess Moussellina, the use of whose tongue had returned with her laugh, was prodigiously embarrassed; and we may be well assured that the heart of no Princess, since the commencement of the world, was ever agitated with a more violent contention of the feelings of modesty, pride, virtue, maternity, and self-love, which usually reign therein. At length her happy genius inspired her; she heaved a deep sigh, and after making, like a dutiful child, a reverential curtsey to the King her father, "Sire," she exclaimed, "since, in order that

your royal word be kept, I must wed the youngest Facardin, I consent; and I prefer that he should retain his present form to the horrible idea of giving you monsters for grandchildren"; and as she spoke she presented her hand to the monkey-prince, who, affected by such tenderness, bent his knee on the ground very respectfully, and taking the Princess's hand very delicately in his paw was about to kiss it; but before his apish snout could touch the lovely hand the marvellous cock alighted on his pate, pecked it strongly, and, flapping his wings thrice, at the third flap he flew away with the skin and tail of the monkey, and in his place we beheld a remarkably handsome young man—to the vast satisfaction of the King and the surrounding multitude. Caramoussal declared that Destiny, satisfied at the generous resolution of Moussellina, had in consequence, and in her favour, entirely destroyed every spell of enchantment, and that her children would be the loveliest in the world.

Attention was then turned towards Sapinella of Jutland, who had awakened in her chariot, as had also her Facardin, in conformity with the prediction of the oracle of the Cave of Boreas. These illustrious personages appeared somewhat embarrassed at finding themselves in such a position in the presence of such a multitude. Moussellina, who was no longer the Serious, conducted the Infanta of Denmark to her own apartment, and her father ordered restoratives to be administered to Facardin of Mount Atlas, who was in great need thereof. He had forgotten during his lethargy the Nymph of the Steel Bow, whose slipper was no longer to be found. Sapinella was very charming; he was sure of the consent of her father, Fortimbrass, for whom he had so fortunately procured the expansive mouth which formed his happiness. The Princess was not insensible to his love, and thus there was nothing wanting but the consent of his mother,

who, finding the alliance all that could be desired, gave her free permission.

The two espousals took place with a magnificence I shall not attempt to depict, for fear I might be accused of exaggeration—a reproach I by no means deserve. My two brothers thus provided for, the tall Facardin of the Fish-Kettle, somewhat embarrassed at appearing in this august assembly with his military-culinary costume, which was no longer of any avail, resumed his helm and sword, and set forth with the Knight of the Awl and him of the Cock, in search of new adventures. Crystallina, whose curiosity was not yet satisfied, followed them in the attire of a page, trusting to find various opportunities of satisfying her taste. I embraced my brother tenderly, and he promised me that I should be duly informed of all that happened to him, and if it be interesting I shall request your Highness' permission to relate it to you. As for my mother, she yielded to the entreaties of her daughter-in-law, the Princess Sapinella, and accompanied her to Denmark. I wished all a happy journey, and then wended on my way to Trebizonde, in order to execute any orders with which my Lord the Sultan might please to entrust me.

. . . . . .

"Ah!" exclaimed Dinarzade. "So then we are at length delivered from all this Facardin stuff! though, to be sure, it is not without trouble; for we have had to run over mountains and valleys, to the north and to the south, and to the east and to the west, and, nevertheless, to those who have any curiosity or any taste for a complete story, yours must be very unsatisfactory. We have no information of the old woman of Mount Atlas—we know not what became of the Spindles, nor wherefore the Knight of the Cock dresses

himself in so remarkable a manner—then moreover these contradictions and mysteries——"

"Pray, madam, do hold your tongue," said the Sultan, rubbing his eyes; "if we were all so difficult of conviction, there would be no occasion to read histories, for those written nowadays are quite as obscure, scarcely more true, and certainly less amusing than the narration we have just heard."

"That can only be," retorted Dinarzade, pettishly, "when compared with those miserable productions which your Highness is pleased to approve, and if my sister, the Sultana Scherazade, had not lost her voice, she would relate adventures infinitely superior; but at least the Prince of Trebizonde ought to explain to us how he became brother to the other three Facardins—a circumstance which, as yet, he has left unexplained."

"True—true—very true," said the Sultan of the Indies, "you ought, Prince of Trebizonde, to have asked your mother for the recital of her adventures."

"I did so, Sire," replied the eldest of the Facardins, "and I have them about me, and will, with your gracious permission, read them, if your Highness will deign to listen. But I hear the crier, who is reminding all faithful Mussulmans that to-day is Friday, and, as various duties now commence, I will retire."

"Stay—stay—pray stay," said the Sultan, abruptly; "we are not precise as clock-work here. Besides, princes have legitimate excuses, and the great duties they have to fulfil to their subjects, enable them to dispense with minute details."

Dinarzade smiled significantly—the Sultana sighed, and the Prince of Trebizonde, after thrice clearing his voice, thus commenced the history of his mother:—

MEMOIRS OF THE DOWAGER PRINCESS OF TREBIZONDE, MOTHER OF THE FOUR FACARDINS

The few charms with which nature gifted me have been fatal to my repose. I was living tranquilly with my spouse, the Prince of Trebizonde, and one son was already the fruit of our union, when, walking one evening with my women on the verdant banks of the Black Sea, I perceived amongst the rocks a beautiful lizard, as green as an emerald. It did not attempt to escape, but on the contrary crawled towards me, whilst I contemplated it with interest, remarking that it had on its back some strange characters traced in gold. It seemed so gentle and pleasing that I was seized with a desire to take it up, but my repugnance for such reptiles was such, that I hastened away, and then I saw it disappear in the crevices of a rock.

Scarcely had I advanced a hundred paces from this spot, when I perceived on the sea-shore a small bird of a resplendent yellow plumage, with a tuft on its head and the tail of brilliant red. I observed that it was struggling violently, and on approaching found that it had incautiously put its bill into a half-opened oyster, which had closed upon it and caught it as in a trap. The poor little sufferer interested me so greatly that I took up the oyster and freed the bird. I expected, of course, that it would instantly fly away, but, instead of this, he flapped his wings and put his beautiful beak in my mouth, to thank me. This greatly interested me, and I held out my finger, on which it immediately perched, and I conveyed it to my apartment. It was so gentle and tame, that when I placed it in a cage, I left the door open that it might, if it pleased, come out and rest on my parrot's perch. I went to bed with the Prince,

my husband, as usual. Next morning he set out for the chase very early, without waking me, when suddenly I was aroused by a dazzling light in my chamber. I opened my eyes, and saw the bird on the perch, who, gradually increasing in size, became a Genie whose features were regular, but whose countenance was rather imposing than agreeable.

"Madam," he said to me, approaching towards my bed, "pardon the disguise, the result of the passion with which you have inspired me. It was I who appeared to you yesterday in the shape of a green lizard, then as a bird; for my power, great as it is, did not enable me to penetrate to your apartment without your consent: the fairy who presided over your birth protected you from such an event."

"Sir," I replied, greatly alarmed, "if my consent to your being here is necessary for your remaining, I declare that I entirely withhold it, especially at such an early hour."

"It is too late now, Madam; you have established me in your chamber, and here I shall remain. Remember that your reputation can be by no means affected, as I can become a bird again as soon as you please."

"That I will never believe, unless I see it," I replied, in a mild tone.

"Well then, Princess, you shall be convinced";—and as he spoke, his size gradually diminished; his cap, adorned with handsome red feathers, became again a tuft; his dress, of jonquil satin, changed into plumage of the same colour. The metamorphosis was complete, and he began flying round the chamber. I presented my finger to him, resolved, if I caught him, to put him into the cage, in order that I might thus free myself from his importunities; but he guessed my intention; and, resuming his natural shape, said to me, in a tone of mockery,—

"You wish, then, to imprison me—surely it is enough to bear your fetters as I do. I will say more to you when you are at my abode." And so saying, he touched me with a small ivory wand he had concealed in his sleeve.

"Become a parroquet," he exclaimed in a loud voice, and I was transformed into a parroquet accordingly. I was so astonished at seeing myself, in my mirror, with a green plumage, a long tail, and two small round eyes fringed with red, that I allowed him to catch me very easily. He put me into the cage, opened the window, and darted away with me. I cannot precisely say how long our flight lasted, for it was made with such rapidity that I could not discover the country over which we passed; all I know is, that I was perfectly giddy with it when we reached the Genie's dwelling, which he had fixed in the midst of an extensive orange grove. That in which he lived was much higher than the highest minarets of our mosques, and the trunk was as big in circumference as a tower; and in the lower part dwelt the sprites, and goblins, and other petty officers of his house, reserving to himself the upper parts of the tree, whose branches were formed into a suite of *boudoirs* very artistically arranged; festoons of flowers and garlands of fruits decorated the apartments, furnished with elegant simplicity. At the end of the sleeping-room was a *parterre*, ornamented with the rarest plants from the three quarters of the globe, and a small orchard of dwarf trees, of all the known species, and always in full bearing with the most delicious fruits. These aërial gardens terminated with a kiosk, in the shape of a nest, placed in one of the highest branches, whence there was a superb view extending beyond the forest.

When I had rested for a little while the Genie restored me to my own form, and led me to this pavilion.

"Look about you," said he; "all that you can see for fifty leagues round belongs to me; but as your sight is too weak to distinguish objects from the height at which we are, take these eye-glasses, to which I have affixed two prepared lynx-eyes."

I put on these spectacles, and saw beneath me the most fertile lands, the most luxuriant fields, ripening harvests, grazing flocks, orchards laden with fruit: I distinguished the streams which wound amongst the groves, and boats navigating a lovely river, which flowed gently on. All this landscape was animated with a population of both sexes, who were occupied in agricultural labours, and who appeared joyful and at their ease. I should have contemplated this delightful spectacle with pleasure if I could have forgotten the darling objects I had left at Trebizonde —the Prince, my husband, and my son; but they were constantly in my thoughts. I threw myself on my knees before the Genie, and said to him:—

"Sir, you are one of the most powerful and richest sovereigns in the world; you have a dwelling as singular as it is agreeable; you rule over extensive provinces, and have, at your order, beings who have each of them more power than the first monarchs of the earth; nothing is wanting to your happiness: then pity an unhappy Princess who has never offended you, and do not any longer trouble the repose of an illustrious and virtuous family."

"Your beauty, Madam," replied the Genie, "destroys the effect of your discourse; all the riches I have disclosed to you have no longer any value for me unless they are shared by you; or if you do not give me your heart in exchange for mine, I would prefer being reduced to the condition of a simple gnome, if you would become my wife"; and he accompanied these words with an oath so terrible that the

whole tree shook. This violence frightened me, and knowing I was in his power, I tried to gain time, and therefore entreated him not to speak to me of his love before the expiration of two months: he would only grant me eight days, and I then withdrew to the apartment destined for me, praying to all the powers of Heaven, and bewailing my unhappy lot. I should have remained absorbed in my grief had not the Genie insisted on my taking a walk every day. One evening, whilst I was contemplating with surprise a fountain which played with delicious freshness in this enchanting spot, I remarked a small sylph, the loveliest little creature in the world, who was taking water from it to pour on some carnations.

"Princess," he said to me, "this spring surprises you—know, then, that it is due to the toil and industry of my brethren. They sweep with their wings the dew that falls on the leaves and buds into reservoirs which nourish this fountain; but I should deeply lament to see it augmented by the tears which flow from your beautiful eyes. Alas! why is it not in my power to console you?"

"Benevolent little creature," I replied, deeply affected, "the only means of alleviating my grief would be by delivering me from this place, in which I have everything to fear for my honour."

"To deliver you is impossible," responded the sylph; "all I can do is to consult a hermit my friend, the possessor of some extraordinary secrets, and who might serve you. I risk much in even attempting this; and if the Genie, my master, suspected me, I should be shut up for two or three thousand years in one of the roots of this great tree. This would be a fearful penance for one who loves the open air and liberty, as I do; but we must run

some risk to succour beauty in distress, and to-morrow you shall hear from me."

Next day I was at the fountain before him, but he was not long after me: he told me he had seen his friend the hermit, and obtained from him a book endowed with marvellous virtues.

"Here it is," said he, "and you must never part with it." He quitted me instantly, and I returned to my apartment, and there read in the first page the words, "*Avoid opportunity.*" I turned to the next leaf, and then the same words were written, and, in fact, repeated on every page, and this marvellous book contained nothing more. I laid it on my table, and thought no more about it. However, the respite granted by the Genie soon passed—every day he became more pressing and I more unhappy; for my duty and my inclination both revolted from him. At length my little friend the sylph informed me that his master intended from that very evening to compel me without further delay to occupy the same apartment as himself. Scarcely had he told me this, when the Genie appeared.

He was violently excited, and instead of his usual protestations of love, made to me the most revolting proposals. I begged; I wept; I prayed—nothing could prevail upon him, and I was on the point of falling a victim to his violence, when, strange to say, the little book came flying towards us and interposed itself between us. The Genie tried to ravish a kiss, when the little book placed itself on his lips: scarcely had he removed it than it fell in my bosom, which he was pressing with too bold a hand; in fact, in all directions, and whatever he attempted, there was the magic buckler, everywhere, and at every spot it opposed his endeavours, and with a success that rendered them unavailing. The Genie foamed with rage, and unable to break the

force of the charm, he seized upon me, and flung me and my book over the boundary wall of the garden: from this vast height I fell, and had not the dear, obliging little sylph broken my fall, I must have been dashed to pieces. I was a long time recovering my senses, and when restored to them, I found myself on a litter, borne by four wood-cutters, who conveyed me to a hut, where I received from an old woman, who lodged with them, all the care I required. As soon as I was somewhat recovered, I inquired the distance to Trebizonde, but these worthy people had never heard of such a city. I then asked the name of the country in which I was, and they told me I was two days' journey from Mount Atlas. As I was putting these questions there was a noise at the entrance to the hut; it was a knight, who was passing with his squire, and asked for some refreshment, for it is prodigiously hot in this part of Africa. He was greatly astonished to see in this hovel a person of my rank. I told him my name, without, however, entering into the details of my history, and entreated him by all the objects of his affection to conduct me to Trebizonde. "It will take me," he replied, "seven months' journey to escort you so far, but I promise to conduct you thither as soon as I have terminated the business that brings me into this country. I have come hither to consult the great Caramoussal, whose reputation extends over the whole world: if he cannot restore to me the happiness of which I have been deprived, I shall die, for I canot live after the loss I have sustained. Judge yourself," he continued, with tears in his eyes; "see the likeness of her who was my beloved wife"; and at the same time he drew from his right pocket the portrait of so lovely a woman, that it was difficult which most to admire, the regularity of her features, or the delicacy of

her physiognomy. When we had contemplated it for some time, he drew (sobbing deeply) from his left pocket a golden case, about as long as a finger. "Look," he exclaimed, "this is all that remains to me of this adorable creature; the excess of her sensibility has reduced her to this condition; her mind was equal to her personal attractions, and her love to me exceeded both. I adored her, and still she was not happy; her nervous and susceptible disposition always conjured up a thousand chimeras, which all my attentions were incapable of removing.

"'You love me,' she would say; 'at least you tell me so, and perhaps you do, and are sincere; but you are in error. You find me pretty, and it is my eyes and features that have gained me your liking—it is not my mind that you love.'

"In vain did I try to persuade her of the contrary; I could not convince her, so at last she went to the tutelary fairy, who protected her family, and by her importunities obtained from her the power of decomposing herself. The first use she made of this unfortunate power was to deprive herself of an eye.

"'Well,' she said, 'do you still love me with this deformity?'

"'Yes, indeed, and very truly,' I replied; 'more than ever.'

"Then she took off one of her ears; and at length, desirous of putting her experiment to the utmost extremity, and madly jealous of the form I idolised, she began by degrees to melt away, first half an inch, then an ell, until she wasted to the length of my finger. This, however, was but a temporary trial, for she relied on being able to resume her natural size, as well as the lost eye and ear. Unfortunately, however, she had not this power, and after various fruitless efforts she fell sick with vexation, and

died, the victim of her own folly. As for me, in despair at her premature death, I embalmed her, and here she is." He then opened the *étui*, and showed me a small mummy, embalmed after the Egyptian manner. However engrossed with my own grief, I could not forbear shedding tears at the fate of this unfortunate lady. The Knight, after having kissed the cold relic, closed the case, and put the dear object of his deep regret in his pocket, uttering a heartfelt sigh. He then offered to conduct me to a nobleman of his acquaintance, who lived in a fine château at the foot of Mount Atlas, whilst he went to consult the Enchanter Caramoussal, who occupied the summit. I accepted his obliging offer, and left the honest woodcutters, promising faithfully to recompense them richly, so soon as Fortune should afford me the means.

I was extremely well received at the château. I remained there ten days, at the end of which we saw the Knight return, more depressed, if possible, than ever. He told us that the Enchanter had declared to him that he never could revivify his mummy, unless he obtained the permission of the old woman of the spinning-wheels; that he had set out at once to solicit this, but she had asked such terms for her consent, as he was unable to accede to, however desirous he might have been to do so. When pressed for an explanation he blushed, and continued his recital thus:—

"She required that I should reside for six months in her hut, having no bed but hers, and by way of earnest she gave me a kiss that almost suffocated me. I thought it better to rejoin my deplored wife by dying of chagrin, than to expire in the filthy caresses of this infernal and amorous old hag; and if I had not promised the Princess of Trebizonde to escort her back to her dominions, I would

instantly fling myself into the sea headlong; but I will defer this until I have fulfilled my engagement with her." All present tried to console him, but he remained inflexible in his determination. At length we set out, and traversed the banks of the Mediterranean to the Isthmus of Suez—I must speak in the highest terms of the attention and care of the disconsolate widower during this long journey. For my part, I endeavoured to soothe his sorrows, and offered him every consolation which friendship could suggest, for I really felt a sincere regard for him. I saw with pleasure that my endeavours were not in vain, and when we reached Bagdad, where we remained several days, making preparations for crossing the Great Desert, it struck me that a soft melancholy had replaced the deep sadness which had hitherto overspread his countenance. As for me, my mind was divided between hope and despair, and I sighed for the moment when I should again find myself at Trebizonde; but I was afraid that grief at my loss had destroyed the health of my husband, whose tenderness I so well knew. I gave myself up to this reflection, as I wandered alone on the banks of the Euphrates on the evening appointed for our departure, when the Knight came hastily towards me. He appeared troubled, and begged me to return to our abode, without giving me any reply to my questions. I could not extract from him anything but general reflections on the miseries of human life, and broken words, which were of evil omen, until, at length, unable longer to endure this painful position, I entreated him to explain all to me without reserve. I then learnt, with what agony you may imagine, that he had met a slave merchant, who had just arrived from Trebizonde, where a sad calamity had occurred since my departure. The Prince of the Bactrians had profited by the great trouble of my husband, and the state of de-

jection into which he had sunk, to attack his kingdoms; he had even penetrated to the capital, and by a general assault carried the place: all the courage of the Prince of Trebizonde had been unequal to its defence, and he had died gloriously, sword in hand. The cruel conquerer had fired the palace, and my son, the youthful Prince, had perished in the flames. I fainted when I heard this intelligence; and when at length I was restored to my senses, I gave way to the most fearful despair. The Knight, instead of abandoning me to my unhappy fate, redoubled his care and attentions, and proposed to me to go with him to the kingdom of Samarcand, where his sister, a rich and amiable widow, had large estates, and who would, he assured me, receive us with pleasure. All had now become indifferent to me, and I consented to accompany him; and two months afterwards we reached the termination of our journey. The lady of the castle was absent, but her brother did the honours of the enchanting abode. He neglected nothing that could amuse me, and every day there was some fresh pleasure. He was no longer engrossed with the thoughts of her who had been so long the object of his regrets. I had replaced her in his heart. Still, respecting my deep sorrows, he was some time before he made known to me his passion, and when he did so I struggled against it for a long time; but as his birth, his fortune, and his good qualities were not unworthy of me, I finally consented to give him my hand. The following year I gave birth to a son, whom I called Facardin, in memory of him whom I believed I had lost, and whose memory was always present to my mind. The Knight, my husband, was overjoyed at this event. He had given up all adventure, and would never have left me, had not his passionate ardour for the chase sometimes led him to pass whole days in the thick forests with which the

country is covered. They were filled with bears, lions, tigers, and other ferocious animals, amongst which the wild boars were not the least formidable; and one of these animals threw my husband from his horse, and gave him a severe wound in the thigh with his tusks, and in this sad state the huntsmen conveyed him to the castle. I sent for the most skilful surgeons in Samarcand; but when they examined the wound, they at once gave him up as incurable. The Knight heard their opinion with much firmness—begged to see me, and when I came by his bedside thus addressed me:—

"I must regret, my dear Madam, that I cannot throw myself at your feet; for it is there I ought to ask your pardon, although I confess myself unworthy of it."

"Alas!" I replied, "do not add to my grief by language such as this; the despair in which I behold you adds to your suffering; be assured, whatever may be your wrongs to me, I forgive you."

"That is impossible," he said, in an altered voice; "the deep remorse which rends my heart on the brink of the tomb, compels me to reveal to you the fatal secret which has lain so long and so heavily on my conscience. Listen and tremble: the tale I told you at Bagdad of the misfortunes at Trebizonde was but a vile imposition. The Prince, your husband, is living, as well as your son. Forget a wretch who deserves a thousand deaths, and who has no other excuse than the violence of the passion with which you have inspired him. Hate me, despise me; but do not allow the child to be the victim of his father's crime."

His sobs and weakness prevented him from continuing. For me, I found myself in the strangest condition of mind it is possible to imagine. I learnt, on the one hand, of the existence of the Prince of Trebizonde and of my dear

Facardin; but I also saw dying a man to whom I was tenderly attached, and who was the father of my second son. The future was fraught with most cruel doubts for me. Ought I to return to Trebizonde to my legitimate spouse—and ought I to resume my place near him, concealing from him all that had passed; or was it not necessary to avow my fault, and submit to whatsoever he might please to order? In the midst of this perplexity the Knight died. He had placed me in a most deplorable position, and yet I shed tears to his memory. I sent my son to his aunt, and it is he whom you see here to-day, after so many memorable adventures, the husband of the Princess of Jutland. For myself I resolved to set out to Trebizonde, and throw myself at the feet of the Prince, my husband, confessing my crime. I took advantage of a caravan of a slave-merchant, who was going to Circassia, and would halt in the immediate vicinity of Trebizonde.

Fate was not yet weary of persecuting me. As we crossed the deserts of Barbaria, we were attacked by a horde of Tartars, who plundered the caravan, and who, without any respect for my rank and my misfortunes, sold me as a slave to a rich merchant of Moussul. He took me to his house, and I had much to put up with from his wife, who was jealous and ill-tempered. She could not forgive me for the predilection which her husband seemed to entertain for me, and to such a pitch did she carry her feelings, that she actually fell ill and died of vexation. My master was by no means grieved, and speedily proposed to me to occupy her place. I could not, in the degradation of my fortune, testify towards him the indignation which his offers elicited; but as he was still more avaricious than amorous, I told him my name, and a part of my adventures, leaving him to hope that he would receive a large reward from the Prince of

Trebizonde, if he would conduct me to his dominions. This declaration did not fail to produce the effect I expected from it, and he resolving to take advantage of so very fortunate a circumstance, ceased to treat me like a slave, and commenced preparations for our journey.

At this juncture the King of the Afghans, who had some dispute with the Sultan of Moussul, suddenly laid siege to his capital. The ramparts were in excellent condition, and the garrison, consisting of picked men, made a vigorous resistance; so that, after several useless attempts to carry the place by a *coup de main*, the enemy converted the siege into a blockade, hoping to reduce the inhabitants by famine, which soon displayed all its horrors amongst the people of Moussul, who, surprised by the suddenness of the attack, had not laid in any stock of provisions. Food reached an exorbitant price; and I still remember that one of my female acquaintance gave away two hundred fine pearls for the same number of sweet almonds. The merchant with whom I lived, seeing that the siege would be protracted, and that provisions were daily rising in value, went to an old usurer of his acquaintance who had some sacks of rice, and for a large sum of money bought one, which he conveyed to his own house, the same evening. He had had the sack for two days, and had yet not opened it, when we heard, whilst we were at supper, a noise in the room where our stores were kept. The merchant hastened thither, and arrived just in time to seize a robber who had entered by the window, and was hastening away with the sack on his head. "What, wretch!" he said to him, "do you steal from me the food I have procured with so much difficulty, and which cost me so dearly? Come with me to the Cadi—come along, and undergo the just punishment of your crime." The robber threw down the sack, and going on his knees,

pleaded his extreme misery, entreating the merchant to pardon him; but he was inexorable, and was about to call to his slaves to put the culprit in chains, when he, young and powerful, seeing all hope gone, struck the merchant violently in the stomach a blow with his fist, which prostrated him, and leaped out of the window into the garden, where, finding the ladder which he had used in mounting the wall, he escaped. The slaves hastened to their master, who desired them to carry the sack into the eating-room, as he did not think it safe in the magazine until he had had bars placed at the windows. When they had obeyed his orders I again sat down to supper with the merchant; but scarcely had we done so when I heard a singular noise, which seemed to proceed from the sack. I listened attentively, and clearly distinguished a low cry. I rose hastily, untied the sack, and found in it a child, which appeared about two years of age, carefully wrapped up in cotton, proper precaution having been taken to allow it to breathe, and it did not appear to have suffered. It had a lovely face, and extended its little arms in a most endearing manner. It did not, however, affect the old merchant, who cried out brutally—

"Kill the little animal and the rascal who brought it. What thinks he I can do for food? I have no more rice, nor money to buy it."

"Oh, don't let that make you uneasy, old fellow," exclaimed the infant; and so saying, he blew in a little coral whistle ornamented with precious stones. At the first note nothing appeared; but at the second four winged Genii entered the chamber, and assumed a most respectful posture. "You are long in coming," said the infant in an imperious voice: "be more attentive. I command you to bring supper."

His servants disappeared, and in an instant re-appeared with a table covered with the most exquisite viands. What immensely delighted the old merchant was, that the plates and dishes were of gold. When we had supped they cleared away, and the babe said to us benignantly—

"When you want anything, my servants are at your command. You have only to speak. I am the son of the King of the Genii, and will tell you to-morrow why and how I came hither. But it is our bed-time, and I shall feel obliged to you if you will have a cradle got ready for me."

"I will do that with pleasure," said I.

Taking him in my arms, I conveyed him to my own apartment, where we made a small bed for him close to my own. He slept directly he laid down, and I soon followed his example. I was yet in my first sleep when I was awakened by the voice of a man uttering my name. I opened my eyes, and recognised with the greatest pleasure the Prince of Trebizonde, my husband. I was about to spring out of bed and cast myself at his feet, but he prevented me.

"My dear wife," he said, embracing me, "do not make any noise. I came hither with the Prince of Afghan, my friend, to besiege this city. I learnt, by circumstances now too long to detail, that you were shut up here, and discovered your house. I left the besiegers' camp, and have come to seek you through a thousand dangers; but, now I behold you, all is forgotten."

He added a thousand tender things. I was so agitated that I did not know how to express half the feelings that agitated me—love, astonishment, confusion, inseparable from a fault, however involuntary, all oppressed my disturbed mind. If delicacy prompted me to tell him my adventure with the Knight, embarrassment and shame prevented me.

I began an incoherent address, which I interrupted by sighs; at length, my determination taken, and summoning all my courage and firmness—

"I have," said I, "very important revelations to make to you; deign to hear me with——"

"Another time—another time," he said, sealing my lips with a kiss; "now the night is advancing. I must quit the city two hours before day-break, or I shall risk my own life, and that of the guards who introduced me. When we are reunited and peaceable, as I trust we soon shall be, I will listen willingly to all you have to tell me; but let us now enjoy the unhoped-for happiness of finding each other after so long an absence."

So saying, he placed himself by my side, and nothing could exceed his loving demeanour. Next morning very early he arose, and I begged he would allow me to follow him, preferring to brave the utmost danger, instead of remaining separated from him, exposed to all the disagreeables which may beset an unprotected woman.

"If I do not return to you," he said, with an air of disdain which went to my heart, "you may still find some other knight who will take care of you."

"Alas!" I said, with tears in my eyes, "since you know my deplorable adventure, which I would, at the cost of my blood, conceal even from myself, you must also know how I was entrapped in that fatal snare—with what art I was deceived? Oh! if you had seen the sad state into which the news of your death had reduced me, and the sincere regret I bestowed on your memory, you would think me rather to be pitied than blamed, and you would not add your reproaches to those that already torment my own heart."

He interrupted me, saying—"Princess, keep your excuses

for a better occasion. If I were really your husband, I should know how to reply, but I am the Genie of the lofty Orange-Tree. I was resolved to avenge your disdain of me, and assuming the guise of a child, I introduced myself into your abode. You placed me yourself in your own apartment; and, to avoid discussion, I presented myself to you as the Prince of Trebizonde; and this time you had not the little volume to interpose between us and my success. Adieu! in nine months you will have another son, whom you will call also Facardin, as you seem to have a fancy for the name. I will take care of his education. If you should want me, and desire to inhabit my palace, here is a talisman which will convey you thither, by holding it in your left hand."

At these words he disappeared; and, but for the talisman I retained, I could not have believed but that all was a dream. I remained plunged in the deepest affliction.

The siege of Moussul did not advance, the inhabitants contrived to defend themselves in spite of the famine that raged, and the King of the Afghans having been slain in a sortie, his troops retreated, and plenty again reigned in the city. The merchant then thought of carrying into execution the projected journey; but circumstances were greatly changed, and I had as much repugnance to visit Trebizonde, as I had had intense desire before the visit of the perfidious Genie. I pretended sickness, and in truth my health was far from good. The merchant, worn out by my delays, thought of sending one of his clerks to Trebizonde to inform the Prince, requesting him at the same time to send an escort and money, that I might make the journey in a manner conformable to my rank. I perceived that the predictions of the Genie of the Orange-Tree were daily accomplishing; my pregnancy was now but too apparent,

and I no longer quitted my apartment. When the fatal moment arrived, I saw an old woman enter my apartment, who, seating herself unceremoniously on my bed, said — "I have come to receive young Master Facardin; to have a Genie for a lover is so far agreeable, that it spares all the pains of labour; taste what is in this phial, and you will suffer nothing." I saw by her air of authority and her sparkling eyes that it was a fairy who spoke thus to me. I did as she desired me, and the moment I had swallowed the potion went to sleep for an hour; when I awoke the fairy presented my child to me, which she had been washing in a large golden vase filled with rose water.* I gave it a maternal kiss, and I never saw him again but at the court of the King of Astracan, when I recognised him by the air and figure of his father, in spite of his singular costume as a military cook. The fairy carried him away after having left me a second phial, which in an instant recruited my health and strength, so that it was as impossible to perceive what had occurred as if I had always continued a virgin.

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Here Dinarzade interrupted the Prince of Trebizonde. "I regret," she said, "as your mother had so little difficulty in her accouchement, that she had not twins on this occasion, as that would then have made the number of the Four Facardins, and thus her Highness would at once have completed her whole family."

"Do not pay the slightest attention to what she may say," said the Sultan of the Indies; "pray proceed with your narration: it really seems to me quite as interesting as the unmeaning tales I daily — nightly, listen to; only be so

* Chloroform was evidently known in fairyland a considerable period before it was discovered in this sublunary sphere.

obliging as to make your recital of such a length that it may terminate before the breakfast hour."

"Your Highness shall be obeyed," replied the Prince of Trebizonde. "I have merely to add the relation of the birth of the Sorrowful Ape, my youngest brother! But the events which have preceded are the least surprising of those narrated in my mother's history."

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To proceed:—It was precisely on the day after the birth of my third son, that the merchant's clerk returned from Trebizonde, whither his master had despatched him. He was the bearer of very afflicting tidings. The Prince, my husband, had fallen the victim of a protracted illness, and his son had been sent to the court of the Sultan, his lord, in order that he might receive an education befitting his rank. The frightful calamity of the death of my husband made me as unhappy as I had been at Bagdad when the Knight gave me false information. The merchant, thus deceived in his expectations, became furious against me. With no pity for my misfortunes, he took me the same day to the Bazaar and sold me to a slave-dealer: and the following day I set out with a troop of young Circassians to Samarcand, to recruit the harem of the Sultan Schahzenan. As I descended, by my mother's side, from the princes of the country, and my features vouched for my origin, my new master resolved to take advantage of this fact to obtain a better price for me, and he proposed that I should pass with the others as a native of Circassia. We had advanced three days on our journey, and the caravan had halted at the entrance to the desert, near a beautiful fountain. Whilst they were replenishing the water skins of the camels, and those animals, with wonderful instinct, drank deeply of the stream, knowing they would be deprived of water for many days, I

strayed away from the travellers, pondering deeply over my past misfortunes, as well as those which fortune seemed preparing for me, when suddenly a gazelle, bounding rapidly, passed me so closely, as nearly to strike me to the earth. An enormous leopard was pursuing it, and, seeing me as it passed, turned towards me, as if preferring me: I ran away with all my strength, but was nearly falling a prey to the savage brute, when a knight in full armour, fortunately for me, came up and killed the animal with a thrust of his lance. I threw myself on my knees, thanking Heaven and my preserver. He replied, without raising the vizor of his helmet, "Lovely lady, if you believe me worthy of your gratitude, the only way of proving this is to follow me." I was in a position which did not require any second entreaty, and springing up behind him in the saddle, he galloped away with me at a rapid pace. For two hours we proceeded swiftly and without resting, when we reached a forest of lofty oaks, in the midst of which was an old and well-fortified castle, where the knight lived. At his approach they lowered the drawbridge, and I saw by the attention that was paid to him, that he was master there. He desired that I should be conducted to a sumptuous apartment, where he entered shortly afterwards, armed and with his vizor lowered. He begged me to relate to him how I had wandered to the lone spot where he had met me. I told him my history, with the exception of a few particulars which I thought it more discreet to conceal.

"Princess," he said to me with a sigh, "I see you are free, and that nothing prevents you from disposing of your heart. Happy is the man who gains your affections! I dare not flatter myself with such a conquest, but, at least, I will use every effort to deserve it."

From this moment he treated me with all the respect due

to my birth, adding all the attentions of the most delicate love. His conversation was witty and instructive; and there was in his manner something refined and delicate. Yet his figure was by no means elegant; he was small, and, as far as it was possible to judge by his armour, which he invariably wore, he was by no means well made, though his agility was remarkable. As to his features, as he never showed them, I took it for granted they were not handsome; yet his manner was so vivacious that I had no hesitation in assuring myself that his physiognomy was agreeable. His disposition was lively, although he was subject to melancholy moods; but what was most surprising was the facility with which he imitated all he saw and all that was done. I passed three months in the castle, without being ever *ennuyée* for a moment. The master of the house was amiable, without being exacting, and I had the delight of a library, comprising the works of our best Arab poets. In the evening I sometimes took up the lute, and accompanied myself whilst I sang the verses of a favourite song. One day, when I was singing a passage from Saadi, in which he compares life to a stream, which flows sometimes over the rough stones, at others over a silvery sand, but ending, after all, in the boundless, fathomless ocean, I was surprised to hear a soft and melodious voice, which replied to me in other verses of the poet of Schiraz; the sense of which was, that love equalises everything—rank, age, and beauty. The singer was my host, who played on the guitar like a Castilian, although he had his gauntlets on his hands. He begged I would allow him to join me in a duet; and, making a more open declaration than he had hitherto done, he asked me if I should have any objection to unite my fate with his; "for," he added, "what charms me in you as much as your wit and beauty, is your modest and

prudent demeanour. Of all the faults in women, I hate the most, indiscretion and curiosity. I have strong reasons for doing so," he added, with a deep sigh.

I thanked him for the good opinion he had of me, adding that whatsoever might be my imperfections, I was assuredly neither curious nor indiscreet.

"Well," he said, "if you would be content—if you could be content with what you see, and I will tell you, nothing can oppose our union. I am the last son of the King of the Baskirs. The Lesghis, a Tartarean race, have deprived him of his dominions, but they have not penetrated to this property, which he settled upon me. If they came, I would make them repent of their temerity. You may judge, from the manner in which I pinned the leopard who would have devoured you, that I have no fear of man. This castle is mine, as well as the extensive domain around it. You know my character and my disposition. As to my face, I have overpowering reasons for not showing it before a lapse of ten years. If you will deign to accept me as a husband, you must promise not to ask me to abridge that period, nor even question me relative to this matter, which is a painful one to me, and renews the remembrance of deplorable circumstances which I would fain efface, and dare not disclose."

The qualities and accomplishments of the Prince of Bascheria had made an impression on my heart; besides, I was indebted to him for my life; and then, moreover, I had no other means of displaying my gratitude, and I therefore accepted his offer under the sole condition that he should grant protection to my son, the young Prince of Trebizonde, should he require it; and this he promised to me. I, for my part, undertook never to seek to penetrate the secrets which he desired to preserve, and the union took place.

He made me magnificent marriage presents, and all the wedding ceremonies took place in the usual way; only when bed-time came I saw with amazement, that he kept on every piece of his armour, except his sword and spurs, which he took off before he got into bed. I made no remark at the first, but when we became a little more familiarised I begged to know of him why he continued to wear this very embarrassing and remarkably inconvenient style of night-dress.

"If you will not disclose your features," I said to him, "wear a mask instead of this helmet with the vizor down, and lay aside this very disagreeable cuirass; or, without taking these precautions, put out the lamp that illumines the chamber."

The Prince of the Baskirs replied, in a tone of some severity, that I ought to abstain from such requests, which he considered as a beating about the bush in order to discover his secret; and he continued to wear his military costume as though the enemy were at his castle gates.

This was the only altercation—slight indeed—that we had during the first month of our marriage; and my husband testified so much love for me, that it was evident that, if he had not the most powerful motives in the world for refusing me, he would have been but too happy to consent to my desires. I saw, however, and with pain, that he was not perfectly happy. Every night he rose two hours before dawn, left my apartment, and only returned just before daybreak, and then he had in his hand a handkerchief, in all probability moistened with his tears, for he heaved many and very heavy sighs. Sometimes I affected to be asleep, in order to discover something, and then I only heard him uttering incoherent phrases, which bespoke the violent chagrin to which he was a prey. I

dared not ask him any questions, but I was uneasy, and my mind greatly distressed.

One evening as I was walking in a melancholy mood on the castle terrace, my favourite attendant, who appeared really attached to me, thinking to ascertain the cause of the trouble in which she saw me, said:—"Can it be possible, Madam, as they say at the court, that the Prince your husband, who seems to be so tenderly attached to you, and moreover so recently wedded, has already another amour? It is incredible—yet they *do* say that he goes every night into the subterranean caverns of the donjon keep, and such visits are highly suspicious. Moreover, can it be true, as I have been assured, that a very handsome female is shut up there? somebody told me he had seen her through the gratings."

These words made a deep impression on me. I had repressed curiosity, but I could not resist jealousy, and I resolved unhesitatingly to clear up my suspicions. The waiting-maid who had excited me, supplied me with the means on the following night. I rose as soon as my spouse had left my apartment as usual, she preceding me with a dark lantern. After making many turnings and windings we reached a small cell, whence we could see what was passing at the lower part of the donjon keep. There I beheld a spectacle which filled me with horror, and has left an ineffaceable imprint on my memory. A female, still lovely, although indescribably thin, had fastened round her body a heavy iron chain; by her side was a man, or rather a spectre, of most hideous aspect, whose pitiless looks struck me with horror. At this moment the door of the dungeon opened, and I saw the Prince of the Baskirs appear, without his sword, and his head hanging down.

"You have kept us waiting to-day," said the infernal

jailer; "if that happens again I shall have to fetch you myself."

The Prince's only reply was a heavy sigh, as he mournfully undid the fastenings of his helmet, and when he had taken it off I saw he had the head of a monkey! I remained mute and thunderstruck with horror! As he put off his different pieces of armour, I saw he had nothing of a man but the voice: all his body was hairy, and his slender legs were put in a kind of boots to imitate the calves of legs; he had, too, an immense tail, longer in fact than his entire person. What a situation for an unhappy princess who has reigned over powerful dominions, and whose beauty has been celebrated in many courts! What an extent of humiliation and degradation! She who had refused so many powerful princes, to find herself the bride of a monkey! I do not know how it was I did not die on the spot, of shame and confusion. What increased my grief was, that I bore in my bosom the pledge of this monstrous love. The mischief was irreparable, and my regrets could in no wise change my wretched situation. However, I must relate the conclusion of this horrid adventure. When the Prince ape had taken off his clothes, the jailer tied him to an iron ring attached to the wall opposite to the miserable female, so that he turned his back to her; and, making her approach, he seized her with the left hand, whilst with the other he grasped the monkey's tail, and using it as a whip, he scourged her soundly on the back. The wretched creature shrieked loudly, and her cries would have affected any person but this pitiless tiger, who paused at times; but it was only to say, "Those who presume too much on their own strength, are scarcely less culpable than they who commit premeditated faults." And he then began again with such fury that her shoulders were a mass of bruises: I do

not know what was the end of this scene of horror, my strength failed me, and when I recovered my senses, I found myself in my apartment, to which I had been conveyed. I learnt that the Prince of the Baskirs was dangerously ill, and soon afterwards a letter was brought to me couched in these terms:—

"Madam, you are now aware of the secret I sought to conceal from you: you think you have grounds of complaint against me, and yet it is you who have caused your own and my misery. If you had kept your engagement and the solemn promises you made, not to seek to pluck out the heart of the mystery which my present situation rendered necessary, the term of the enchantment under which I groaned would have arrived, I should have resumed my original form, and you would not have had to blush for your husband. Your imprudent curiosity has ruined all; I cannot humiliate myself by appearing before you, now you know the condition to which I am reduced; and although you would receive me as a husband, it would be impossible for me to profit by such favourable feelings. I feel that the fatal blow is struck, and death is about to put an end to my misery. Farewell for ever."

The reading of this letter affected me sensibly: I felt that the Prince of the Baskirs had really grounds for reproaching me, and that if I had had the strength to resist perfidious suggestions and my over-fatal jealousy, I should have contrived to live peaceably, and we should have speedily attained the destined term; I vainly tried to console myself by thinking that a thousand women in my place would all have committed the same fault; I desired to go and beg pardon of the dying prince, but he would not allow me, without however exhibiting any anger against me; he even left me his estates when he was dead, and

when I had paid him all funeral honours, I determined to go and consult the great Caramoussal, of whom I had heard in my travels, to demand his protection for the unborn being I dared not to call my child. Having used the utmost speed, I reached his abode in the eighth month of my pregnancy; he consulted the book of fate, and then declared that it depended on myself to bring forth a creature, who should be neither quite a man nor quite a monkey, or to divide his life into two portions, during which he should be by turns man and monkey; I resolved on the latter arrangement, and you have all seen under what a hideous covering the youngest of the Facardins was born; but you do not yet know how greatly the nobleness and elevation of his mind have recompensed me for the drawback of his face and figure. From his cradle the love of glory was his ruling passion, and instead of jumping and skipping about, like the juvenile animals of his species, his greatest pleasure has been in reading serious books, or the conversation of highly intelligent and educated persons. He was about eighteen years of age when a Calendar, who arrived from Astracan, stopped at our castle. He expatiated with much emphasis on the wonderful beauty of Moussellina the Serious, and the recital fired the youthful imagination of my son, who, however, by no means concealed from himself the disadvantageous appearance he should present to the Princess; but he desired, at all events, to satisfy his curiosity and see with his own eyes whether renown had not exaggerated her charms. I did all in my power to restrain him, even so far as refusing him an equipage suitable to his birth and condition; but he set out in spite of my vigilance, and going from forest to forest, reached Astracan, which he entered by night for fear of being seized upon. At daylight he climbed up one of the trees of the royal palace,

hoping to see the Princess, who was the object of his long journey, but she did not appear. He only saw the King, her father, on the terrace. My son overheard, at this moment, two archers of the guard, who were talking together at the foot of his tree, of a frightful conspiracy against the life of the good King of Astracan.

"My arrows," said one of them, "are poisoned, and I only await a favourable opportunity to let one of them fly."

The noble monkey, who was more agile than even those of his kind, lightly descended to earth, took one of the arrows from the quiver of the treacherous soldier, and leaping on the terrace, laid it at the King's feet, writing on the gravel at the same time "*poisoned arrow*," and then pointed towards the two archers, who had no idea of escaping. They were arrested, confessed their crime, and the whole court re-echoed with the praises of the sage monkey. The Princess expressed a desire to see him, and even offered him a walnut, which he accepted with respectful gratitude. He found that all they said of the Princess's great beauty was (contrary to usual report) true, and then conceived a passion for her which, in all probability, will only end with his life; but, at the moment he was in despair, and by a singular caprice of fortune, the torments he experienced, differing so totally as they did from those of the other suitors, were not the less terrible. In fact, the cruelty of their adored ones are what lovers usually dread, whilst the caresses of the Infanta of Astracan almost drove my son to despair. He felt that they were bestowed on a vile animal, under whose similitude he appeared, and from which it was impossible to distinguish him. Still he lost no occasion of paying his addresses to her; and as they had assigned to him apartments with the first valet of the King, he presented himself regularly in the ante-chamber of the

Princess, and followed her when she went abroad, carrying her fan and gloves; but he exhibited remarkable discretion in his conduct, always refusing the state presentations which were offered to him. It was even noticed that, when she went to bathe in the river which ran through the park, he stayed behind the first clump of trees,—a modesty which greatly amused the maids of honour; and it even passed into a proverb—"Modest as the Great Monkey."

It was at this epoch that the King of Astracan decided on sending to the enchanter Caramoussal, the embassy of which you have no doubt heard. It was never understood why this monarch sent three hundred monkeys in the suite of the ambassador. Politicians exhausted themselves in conjecture, in order to explain this determination, and some carried their temerity so far as to say that it was to be attributed to mere fancy; a mode as brief as disrespectful of penetrating the resolutions of great princes, whose motives are almost always misconstrued or perverted by the vulgar. Be this as it may, the King of Astracan being determined to send a great number of monkeys to the Enchanter of Mount Atlas, it was natural that he should choose my son as leader of the troop. He conducted himself in this delicate mission with all the wisdom and good sense which characterise him, and if he could not establish thorough discipline amongst such determined and practical marauders, his personal conduct at least deserved the most decided esteem. He was seen gravely seated on his elephant (when not occupied in writing despatches for the court), occupied in the study of books of morals or history. However, towards the end of the journey, the anguish he experienced at finding himself at such a distance from his beloved and beautiful mistress, who had promised to write to him, and did not keep her word, threw him into a deep melancholy,

and he passed whole days in tears, which acquired for him the cognomen of the Sorrowful Ape. The satraps who were alive to his great merits, made many useless attempts to soothe his chagrin, and frequently mingled their tears with his; but their anxiety attained its utmost height when on quitting a certain forest, having called over his troop, he suddenly disappeared. My son, uneasy as to his fate, had hastened ahead of the procession in order to consult Caramoussal secretly, and the Enchanter sent him, as he usually did all, to the grotto of Mount Atlas. There extraordinary adventures befel him, for the old woman with the spinning-wheels, who was usually so free to all the world, sent him away contemptuously; whilst on the contrary the Nymph with the Steel Bow, who had so disdainfully repulsed the handsome Facardin, my second son, made the tenderest advances to this one. Such caprices were then common amongst the fairer sex, who seldom give way so much in this our time. It appears that this lady was fascinated not only by the wit and natural graces of my son, but by his facility in bending the bow she presented to him. He would not probably have been insensible to her charms, had not those of Moussellina the Serious made so deep an impression on his heart. I do not know the sacrifice by which he obtained from her the use of her bow and arrows to save the caravan which Caramoussal informed him was in great danger. He reached fortunately at the important moment when certain lions and certain tigers were about to make dire slaughter. Every arrow slew one of these terrible animals. My son faithfully returned to the Nymph the bow and quiver, and then went to the Enchanter Caramoussal, entreating him to shorten, by the exercise of his art, the period of the enchantment, which prevented him from appearing under his natural form. We met at Mount

Atlas, whither I had betaken myself in order to obtain information of him. We found Caramoussal very busy stitching together, with a diamond needle and invisible thread, the extensive mouth of a young man whose arm was in a sling, and who had been for some time a boarder with him.

"I am frequently compelled," he said to us, "to repair the follies of my brethren. The Prince whom you see had been transformed into a lion, by a cruel fairy, and under that form he fought with the Facardin of Mount Atlas, who cut off his paw. A clumsy botcher of a magician to whom he applied has restored him to human shape, but was unable to contract his mouth, so that he could find no one to marry him, although he is a remarkably good catch. If his arm does not soon recover, I shall send him to the mineral waters of Barege, which I hope will restore him to his original sound condition."

When Caramoussal had concluded his operation, he was kind enough to conduct us in person, on his flying car, to Astracan. You know the rest, as you have seen the marvellous termination of this adventure. However, you are probably ignorant that the worthy Enchanter directed his attention to repairing the disaster which happened to Mousselina's shifts. If he could have got the three spindles together, nothing would have been easier; in three moments he would have spun sufficient to have made the wedding robes of all the brides in the world, and still have had enough left to complete the great ladder whose base is at the sea shore, and whose top reaches the summit of Mount Atlas! But of all complete spinning-wheels, the only one in his possession is that which the crocodile had on his snout when he fought with Crystallina's Genie. At the moment when, inflated with his victory, he was off his guard, a small Triton, in the shape of a shark, sent by Caramoussal, gulped down the

spinning-wheel, and conveyed it to his master; and the Enchanter made use of this to spin some thousand ells of a certain species of asbestos, which is found in Caucasus, and which is not only incombustible, like other substances of this kind, but has also the property of extinguishing anything that is on fire. With such shifts, Moussellina, who, like many other ladies, has the dangerous habit of going too close to the fire in winter, is under no dread of being caught by the flames.

I cannot conclude these memoirs without expressing my regret that this incomparable Princess could not ensure the happiness of each of my four sons, who were all worthy of her by their good qualities of mind and body. May my tenderness, Prince of Trebizonde, and that of the lovely Dinarzade, be your recompense!

. . . . . .

When the Prince of Trebizonde had finished reading these memoirs of the Princess his mother, the Sultan of the Indies, who had been asleep for a good quarter of an hour, awoke and said:—

"All this is very credible, only I do not quite understand how the monkey's tail, which flogged the female in the cavern, could excite the laughter of Moussellina the Serious; but in all stories I ever heard or read, there are things which I could not always clearly explain."

"For me," said Dinarzade, "I should like to know what fault this poor woman had committed, and why she had been condemned to so extraordinary a punishment. I presume that the Prince, who was the instrument, was even less guilty than she, but yet was not altogether innocent. I presume also——"

"Pray presume by-and-by," said the Sultan, ringing for his chief eunuch, in order to rise.

"If the Princess is curious," said the Prince of Trebizonde, "and your Highness would learn the details of this adventure, I can obtain them from my mother, who will send them from Demerara by an early post."

"We shall see," replied the Sultan, who was for the moment wearied of story-telling, and made a sign to the Prince, who retired. As for himself, the Sultan of the Indies rose, washed himself, breakfasted, dined, supped, and the people of India blessed the benignity, glory, and sagacity of his government.

End of Part II. of The Four Facardins, written by Monsieur De Levis.